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The Quiver

Feb.
1926

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The Quaker.



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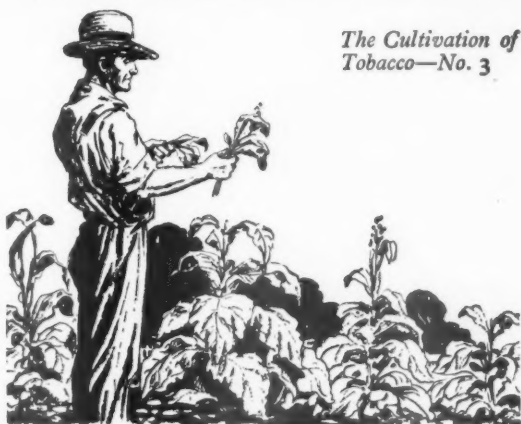
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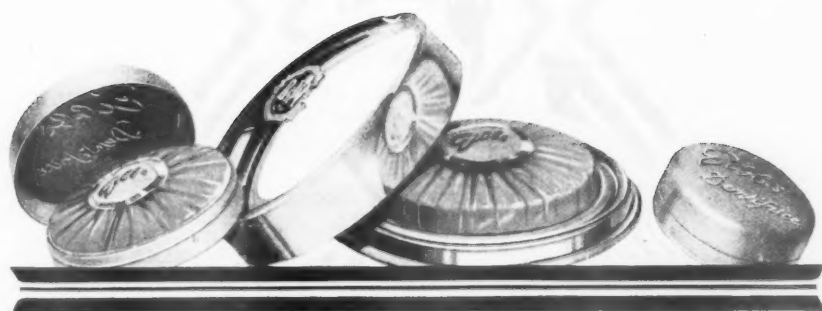
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Gibbs Dentifrice

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3 Gibbs Dentifrice is mildly alkaline by reason of its pure saponified vegetable oils. It contains no harsh substance to wear the precious enamel or cut into the necks of the teeth—that real danger line where the enamel meets the sensitive tissue of the gums.

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Gibbs Dentifrice.

Gibbs Dental Cream.

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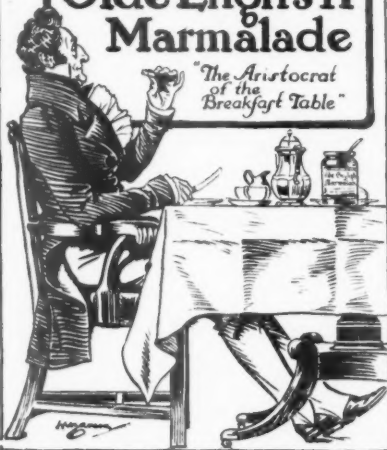
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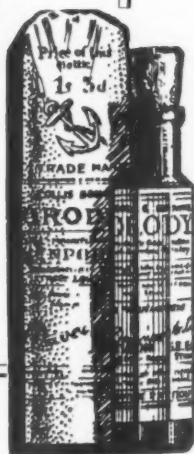
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The Quiver Contents

FEBRUARY, 1926

	PAGE		PAGE
No Compromise. Story by VICTOR L. WHITECHURCH. <i>Illustrated by Leo Bates</i>	331	Mrs. Muddiman Charges Her Mind. Story by E. BRENDA SPENDER. <i>Illustrated by W. Lunt</i>	400
Children Round the World. The Camera and Child-life. By ALEXANDER G. STEWART. <i>Illustrated from photographs</i>	338	The Stock Exchange and Its Work. A Peep Behind the Scenes. By AN OLD HAND	405
Coughs and Colds. A Timely Talk. By DR. C. W. SALEEBY, F.R.S.E.	346	PRACTICAL HOME-MAKING:	
Another Cinderella. Story by WILLIAM C. LENGEL. <i>Illustrated</i>	349	Comforts for the Sick-Room. By AGNES M. MIAL. <i>Illustrated from photographs</i>	409
The Valentine Immortal. By ROWLAND GREY. <i>Illustrated from a photograph</i>	359	The Popular Vegetable Dinner. By JESSIE A. KNOX	412
THE PROPER PLACE. Serial Story. By O. DOUGLAS. <i>Illustrated by John Cameron</i>	363	Things That Matter. Diminishing the Ordinary. By REV. ARTHUR PRINGLE	415
Westminster from Within. Parliament in Session. By E. HAVERS RUTHERFORD	383	The Gropers. Story by ALICE LOWTHER. <i>Illustrated by W. Lunt</i>	418
The Heritors of the Hill. By H. MORTIMER BATTEN, F.Z.S. <i>Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds</i>	389	A Chat About Children. A Legal Article. By a BARRISTER-AT-LAW	421
Should Children Have So Many Toys? By JUDITH ANN SILBURN. <i>Illustrated from a photograph</i>	394	The Lonely Woman in the Country. By ONE WHO LIVES THERE	423
Between Ourselves. By the EDITOR	397	Problem Pages. The Husband's Will—Nursing as a Career—A Domestic Opening. By BARBARA DANE	427
		The New Army of Helpers. Conducted by MISS H. G. SOUTER	430

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The Editor's Announcement Page

HOME-MAKERS' NUMBER

In view of the success of our Home-Makers' Numbers in former years I have arranged once again to devote the March Number to the interests of Home-Making. In addition to the usual features and stories I propose giving fully illustrated articles on "Spring Renovations," by Agnes M. Miall; "Houses Worth Copying," by Edward W. Hobbs; "That Dreadful Breaker: The Psychology of Accidents in the Home," by G. Clarke Nuttall; "Your Kitchen Tool-Box," by Louise Rice, "Modern Methods of Heating and Lighting," "Dining with Dickens," etc.

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Children

This Number has something to say about children: the children at home and abroad, the children with too few and too many toys. We of to-day think more about children than we used; though they are an expense, an anxiety, a tie, we love them as much as parents in any other age—and we try to understand them. Children are not just men and women in miniature; they have their own way of thinking, their own purposes and impulses. Don't smother them with kindness; don't try to stamp your image on them; don't patronize them. Give them a chance.

Common sense, love, understanding; that is what they need.



"He had been wondering what it all meant—especially a string which stretched across the room over the long table"—p. 334

Drawn by
Leo Gulas

No Compromise

by

VICTOR L. WHITECHURCH

THE Bishop of Frattenbury was dining with the Dean. The ladies had retired to the drawing-room. Only the two men were at the table.

The Bishop lighted a cigar.

"Yes," remarked the Dean, thoughtfully, "it's all very well for us to judge in arm-chairs. But when I hear of a case like this, I sometimes ask myself what I should probably do in similar circumstances."

The Bishop removed the cigar from his mouth.

"There, but for the grace of God, goes John Bradford," he quoted.

The Dean understood the allusion. Pious John Bradford had uttered the words on seeing a criminal on his way to the gallows.

"No," he said, "that doesn't quite meet the case. John Bradford was thankful that, by the grace of God, he hadn't followed a career of crime. I mean—well—a God-fearing man like you or me, as I trust we are, suddenly confronted by circumstances of, say, personal danger—and the only way out of that danger, to compromise with the circumstances."

The Bishop flicked the ash off his cigar.

"I see what you mean," he said thoughtfully. "I trust, of course, that neither you nor I would compromise in such a situation. But I daren't boast beforehand that I wouldn't."

"Exactly. Neither do I," replied the Dean. "It makes one feel the weakness of one's own human nature—to think of it."

The two men had been discussing a case that was occupying several columns of the newspaper, the case of a crime committed by a man of hitherto high standing and integrity.

There was silence for a few moments,

and then the Bishop remarked, changing the subject abruptly:

"I have to be in Nettlewick all day to-morrow—presiding over a Conference. We begin with a Service at eight o'clock, which I've promised to take."

"Dear me," said the Dean, "you'll have to leave here very early, Bishop."

"No—I'm going to-night. That's why I mentioned it. I shall have to ask you to excuse me presently. Sir James Perrivale is putting me up, and is going to send his car for me."

"Sir James Perrivale? Oh, yes, of course. He's only lately come to Nettlewick; I haven't met him yet."

"Neither have I," replied the Bishop. "But he wrote me a very nice letter when he heard I was going to Nettlewick, and offered me hospitality. I think he'll be an acquisition to the Diocese. By the way, I asked him to tell his chauffeur to call for me here. My bag is in your hall. I thought it would save my going back to the Palace."

"Certainly," said the Dean, glancing at the clock on the mantelpiece. "What time do you expect him?"

"He should be here about nine. It's a twenty-mile drive, you know, and I don't want to be very late—it's just on nine now. I ought to be getting ready."

"Oh, wait till he calls, won't you?"

But the Bishop was most punctilious as to time. It was his boast that he never kept anyone waiting a second. So he insisted upon going into the hall, where the Dean helped him on with his long great-coat. He wrapped his neck in a purple muffler—he was particular as to episcopal colours, and took down his soft, "second best" hat from the rack, a black hat of Homburg shape much used by clergy of to-day.

THE QUIVER

The Cathedral clock had struck nine, and the Bishop, impatient always with anyone who was late, opened the hall door and looked out.

It was a dark night. A garden with a broad carriage drive separated the Deanery from the street which ran through the Cathedral Close; just outside the gate was an electric standard lamp, and by its light a car could be seen drawn up on the farther side of the quiet street.

"There it is," said the Bishop. "I expect the man's a stranger, and doesn't know his way up to the house. Good night—I'm sorry I must leave you so early."

He picked up a well-worn leather suitcase which had travelled with him many hundreds of miles about his Diocese, walked briskly down the carriage drive, crossed the road, and accosted the chauffeur.

"You are waiting for me?"

"Yes," replied the man in a monosyllable.

"Very well, then."

It was a closed car. The Bishop got in, shut the door, and in a moment or two was being driven through the Close into the more brilliantly lighted streets of the city of Frattenbury. The car gathered speed, and presently plunged into the darkness outside the town.

There was an electric lamp outside the car, and by its light the Bishop went through some of his multitudinous correspondence. His thoughts became occupied with many questions concerning his Diocese which this correspondence raised. He was accustomed to concentrate his mind upon such matters when travelling, and, consequently, he took little notice of the time, or of the direction in which the car was moving. Indeed, the darkness of the night would have, in any case, prevented him from noticing the country through which he was rapidly passing.

Presently he replaced his letters in his suitcase, rubbed the mist off one of the windows, and peered out. All he could see, however, were the dim forms of hedges and trees by the side of the road. After a bit he felt the car turn sharply and slacken speed. The hedge now seemed close to the window, the road had narrowed. In a couple of hundred yards the car further slackened speed, and then stopped. The dim form of a white house appeared. The chauffeur jumped from his seat in front and opened the door. The Bishop got out of the car.

As he did so, he was aware of a burst of light—the door of the house was opened, and a man stood at the top of the small flight of steps.

"Here you are, then," he exclaimed, as the Bishop mounted the steps. "You found the car all right, then?"

"Of course," replied the Bishop.

"Good! We're very glad to see you. Come along in."

The Bishop followed him into a small hall, took off his hat, and was about to remove his coat and muffler, when his host said:

"Come straight in to the others. They want to see you badly. Bring your traps with you."

The Bishop glanced at him, a little surprised. Sir James Perrivale was not quite the sort of man he had expected to see. Also, the Bishop wondered a little why he was not in evening dress at that hour. He was a little man, dark, with a decidedly Jewish type of features, dressed in rather a shabby brown suit. Moreover, his hands appeared to be stained and dirty.

The Bishop followed him along a passage, still wondering. A moment or two later he was ushered into a room with three men in it.

"Here he is!" exclaimed the little man in brown. "I won't introduce him by name for you all know of him. Now we can get to work!"

And he rubbed his hands and chortled with much satisfaction.

The Bishop took a swift glance around the room. It was a strange-looking apartment—this room of Sir James Perrivale's. Down one side of it there ranged a long, heavy deal table, something like a carpenter's bench. On it was an array of curious articles: bottles of chemicals; an assortment of copper plates; a large glass vessel something like a tank, divided into several compartments; a gas burner with a crucible over it; and what appeared to be a bowlful of white wax.

With an equally swift glance he looked in turn at the three men. One of them was a tall, evil-looking fellow, dark of countenance and wearing spectacles. The second was a stout, bearded man, with a scar over his left eye. The third man he recognized. For one of the Bishop's idiosyncrasies was that he never forgot a face. And he remembered having met this man several times at his London club. Once he had lunched at the same table with him



"The next moment a pillow was thrust into his face and a dignity of the Church was kneeling heavily on his chest"—p. 336

*Drawn by
Leo Bates*

and a mutual friend. He also remembered that the man had been introduced to him as being a solicitor.

"Good evening, Mr. Royston," he said, a little stiffly. "I cannot quite——"

"Good lord!" interrupted Mr. Royston. It was, perhaps, one way in which to greet a Lord Bishop, but it was a very strange way.

"What's up?" asked the little man in brown.

"It—it isn't *him*!" ejaculated Mr. Royston, regardless of grammar.

"*What?*" cried the other three; and the little man in brown backed to the door, which he closed. Also he turned the key—and pocketed it. This, however, the Bishop did not see. He was too bewildered to notice it.

"May I be allowed to ask——" he began, icily, when the bearded man broke in:

"Who the dickens is he, Royston? You seem to know him."

Mr. Royston pointed at the Bishop's legs—those gaitered legs appearing beneath his greatcoat. The others looked in the direction of the pointed finger—the tall man swore beneath his breath.

"Who *are* you?" he asked.

The Bishop drew himself up.

"I am the Bishop of Frattenbury," he answered, with episcopal dignity. "May I ask which of you is Sir James Perrivale?"

The tall man came a little forward, silencing the others with a gesture of his hand. He spoke with a peculiarly soft voice.

"There appears to be a mistake," he

THE QUIVER

said, addressing the Bishop; "neither of us is Sir James Perrivale. He does not live here. Allow me to ask you a question in return. How did it happen that you came here at all?"

"I came in the car—I expected it."

"Yes—but how came you in it?"

"It was waiting for me outside the Deanery—in the Close at Frattenbury."

"And you thought it was Sir James's car?"

"Certainly," replied the Bishop, "and as I appear to have made a mistake, perhaps you will be good enough to send me to my destination—at Nettlewick. I shall be greatly obliged."

He spoke with considerable dignity; but Mr. Royston suddenly broke in, speaking to the tall man.

"Oh, but it won't do. . . . He's seen me here, and—"

"Shut up!" exclaimed the tall man. And the Bishop, whose suspicions had already been aroused by the strangeness of the room and its occupants, suddenly guessed the truth. He had been wondering what it all meant—especially a string that stretched across the room over the long table—a string from which were hanging a number of new, shining Treasury notes. Had he been a little more diplomatic he might have held his tongue. As it was, he said:

"Yes; I've seen you here, Mr. Royston—and regret to notice in what company. Evidently you were expecting a very different individual from myself—and I understand in what capacity!" He grew angry as he spoke. For the moment he did not realize his own danger. Abhorrence of what had dawned upon him mastered all fears that he might have had. He was always accustomed to speak out plainly and he did so now.

"You are a set of forgers!" he exclaimed.

The bearded man and the little man in brown stepped quickly towards him in threatening attitudes. But the tall man restrained them and took command.

"Won't you sit down, my lord?" he asked very suavely. "This matter requires a little consultation before we can arrive at any conclusion. It is unfortunate—for *you*!"

The Bishop, breathing heavily with indignation, permitted himself to take a seat. And then it began to dawn upon him that he was one against four, and that the situa-

tion might grow complicated. But no one had ever said that the Bishop of Frattenbury was not a courageous prelate.

"Let me ask you, to begin with," said the tall man, who also had seated himself, "if you know where you are?"

"I do not," replied the Bishop. "I naturally thought I was at Nettlewick."

"That is a point in your favour, my lord. I will be quite frank with you—it would be useless to be otherwise after what you have said—and seen. We are, as you conjecture, engaged in certain delicate and artistic productions, the nature of which involves retirement and secrecy. We did expect a certain individual, who, strange as it may appear, neither of us has yet seen. He is an eminent artist—in our profession—and was to have demonstrated to us a higher sphere of work than the production of what used to be vulgarly known as 'Bradburys'—and he pointed to the string of notes that were drying. "As he has to be guarded in his movements—a fact which your lordship can easily appreciate—it was arranged that a car should be waiting for him in a quiet byway of Frattenbury so that there should be no danger of his being seen to enter it at the station. Unfortunately, you came along and took his place. Now we have not the slightest desire for your company, but you will admit that the situation is a little awkward—for all of us?"

"I reciprocate your sentiments," replied the Bishop; "my only wish is to take my departure—as speedily as possible."

"Exactly. The only difficulty is—what are you going to do about it?"

The two men looked steadily at one another. Then the tall man went on:

"I should have been disposed to accede to your wish, my lord—with certain precautionary conditions. But the trouble is that you have recognized our mutual friend—Mr. Royston. Still, let us try to arrive at a solution—that is, if Mr. Royston agrees. Suppose we do you the justice of believing that a man in your exalted position will keep his word? We might be disposed to send you away—not to Sir James, I fear—but to some remote locality, to give us time to carry out necessary precautions—on the condition that you will give us your solemn promise—on oath—never to reveal to a soul what you have seen or heard to-night. I admit it sounds a little melodramatic. But the situation is melodramatic."

"But," broke in Royston, "how can we trust—"

"Wait a bit, Royston. Let's hear what he has to say."

In a flash his conversation with the Dean of a couple of hours before came into the Bishop's mind: "Suddenly confronted by circumstances of personal danger, and the only way out of that danger to compromise with the circumstances." And the Bishop mentally uttered a little prayer for courage. Then he said emphatically:

"I will give no such promise. You may send me to some remote part. But, at the first opportunity I shall give information to the proper authorities."

The tall man took off his glasses, rubbed them with his handkerchief, readjusted them, and looked earnestly at the Bishop.

"Do you mean that?"

"Emphatically."

"Perhaps you have hardly considered the consequences?"

"I have not considered the consequences."

"Quite so."

"What are they?"

The tall man shrugged his shoulders.

"We shall have to decide upon them. I would like to point out to you, however, that no one knows where you are. We cannot very well keep you in perpetual imprisonment, nor can we afford to take any risks. If you remain obstinate, our only course of safety lies in sending you to a very remote place. Shakespeare remarks that no traveller ever returns from it."

"Good heavens," broke in Royston, "you don't mean *that*?" And his face blanched with terror.

"I do mean that. What do *you* say?"

And he turned to the others. The little man in brown nodded slowly. The bearded one growled:

"It's the only way—the brute!"

"We are desperate men, my lord," went on the tall man. "Come now—be reasonable. We have no wish to resort to extreme measures and will take the risk of trusting your word."

The Bishop set his face sternly.

"I will make no compromise," he said.

"Very well," retorted the tall man, "I have done my best. I will even go further. We will give him twenty-four hours to decide?" he asked the others.

They agreed.



The Bishop sat on the bed in the little room in which they had locked him, trying

to grapple with his destiny. There was no sleep for him that night. They had only given him a little bit of candle by which to undress, but he had not taken off his clothes. The candle had long since burnt out, but by its aid he had made a careful examination of the room and had seen that there was no hope of escape from it. It was quite small, containing a single bed, a chair, a washstand and chest of drawers. The window was a little one, and he knew the room was high up in the house—he had mounted two flights of stairs when they took him to it. The door was a strong one, and there was no chance of breaking it down or opening it.

In the dark he sat, solacing himself with a cigar. Surely no prelate was ever placed in so exasperating a position. Here he was, in an unknown house in his own Diocese, lying under sentence of death. At first he had hardly realized it. It seemed too preposterous. But it had been dawning upon him only too vividly that this evil-looking man with suave voice and courteous manner meant what he said. If he had blustered and stormed it might have been different; but there was something sinister in his quiet manner that made the Bishop, student of human nature as he was, shudder involuntarily.

He tried to think things out. It was quite true that no one knew where he was. How could they even guess? He did not even know where he was himself. What had probably happened? Sir James Perri-vale's chauffeur would have called at the Deanery to find that he had gone. The Dean would be puzzled. They might ring up the Palace. That would be no use. What would they think had become of him? The Dean had last seen him leaving the Deanery, had said good night to him on the doorstep, but had not actually seen him get into the car. Suspicions might be aroused, and they might inform the police. But the police would be powerless. There was not the slightest clue. He could not hope for rescue from this direction.

Then he thought of his present situation, puffing his cigar vigorously. He would *not* compromise. He had never gone back on his word in his life. He would *not* condone what was wrong. God give him courage to see it through, whatever was to happen, and—

What was that? A faint gleam of light came into the darkness of the room. Ah—the moon was rising. The strange thought

THE QUIVER

that perhaps he would never see the moon rising again came into his mind as he got up from the bed and crossed the room to the window. The latter was a casement, opening outwards.

Previously it had been too dusk to get a view of the outer world. Now the moon, rising above the trees, brought things into dim outline. The Bishop glanced at his watch. Half-past one. Then he leaned out of the window and looked below.

As he had conjectured, he was a fairly good height up—far too high to attempt an escape in that direction. The wall of the house went sheer down. The window overlooked the side of the house, but was close against the angle of the front, so that by putting his head out a little he could see the drive up which he had come in the car, trees on either side, branching out into an open space, bordered with lawn. Immediately opposite the window were some outbuildings, and he could see, dimly, a ladder hanging on a couple of hooks against the wall of these buildings. It only he could get it up to his window . . . impossible.

A click sounded from below. He leaned out a little farther. Someone had come out of the house. He could see him now—a man—creeping away from the building—carrying something, a bag it looked like, in his hand. He tried to think—not the tall man—no—not broad enough for the bearded individual—not short enough for the little Jewish-looking man in brown. If either of the four, possibly Royston. What was he doing? He disappeared through the trees down the drive.

The Bishop waited—a quarter of an hour or so—looking out of the window into the quiet night. Somewhere in the distance he thought he saw the glimpse of a light. Should he shout for help? Was anyone near?

If he did shout, he would only awaken the inmates of the house. . . . He lighted a fresh cigar. Ah—there was the light again—coming up the drive, too—what?—yes! Someone riding a bicycle.

A sudden thought came into the brain of the imprisoned Bishop. Should he call—should he—but—

The man dismounted from the bicycle and looked up. Evidently he caught sight of the little point of fire on the Bishop's cigar.

"Hullo!" and he came directly under the window.

Quite a soft voice—not raised, but easily heard in the still night.

"Hullo!" replied the Bishop—just as softly. Then he was just about to add an appeal for help when the voice spoke again.

"I've had an awful job to get here. Why the dickens didn't you send the car?"

In an instant the truth flashed into the Bishop's mind. And, quick as the thought, came the impulse that prompted the reply. For the Bishop's brain, at high tension, was wonderfully alert.

"I couldn't!"

Which was perfectly true.

"I dared not hire a taxi. The driver might have spotted something. Managed to get hold of this bike. Come down and let me in."

"Hush—don't speak so loud"—he was in an agony lest any of the others should awake. "I want to tell you something—important. You see that ladder?" And he pointed towards it.

The man looked round.

"Well?" he asked, in a puzzled voice.

"Put it up to the window and come in here. Don't make a noise."

"But why?"

"I'll explain. Make haste."

It might have been the Bishop's mysterious manner or the sheer force of his will. At all events, the man propped his bicycle against the wall and made towards the ladder. The Bishop uttered another of his little mental prayers—for quietness as well as for courage. And then he turned from the window to make his preparations. They consisted in tearing strips from the sheet in his bed, and arming himself with the pillow. The next moment he heard a grating sound and, by the moonlight, saw the top of the ladder against the window sill.

Then he went to the window again and waited—looking out. He was well on the wrong side of fifty, but knew that he held the advantage of surprise. Also, that his life hung in the balance.

Slowly—ages it seemed to be to the Bishop—the other mounted the rungs of the ladder.

"What the dickens is all this foolery?" he asked as he approached the window.

"It's all right," whispered the Bishop. "Here, give me your hand!"

He entered that room in a manner quite unexpected. A hand gripped his, drew him in through the window, suddenly jerked him across the apartment on to the bed,

threw him on his back—and the next moment a pillow was thrust into his face and a dignitary of the Church was kneeling heavily on his chest. He struck out wildly with his one free hand, but with little avail. The Bishop shifted his position, got one knee on the pillow and pressed it down, seized the man's free hand, brought both hands together and managed to wind a strip of sheeting round the wrists.

Then he felt in his pocket for his handkerchief, drew it out, forced it into his antagonist's mouth, taking care to prevent him from speaking, tied it in with a broad strip of sheeting, and, finally, secured the other's kicking feet.

And all this in dead silence, except for a little creaking of the bed.

The Bishop got up and listened. Everything was quiet. Then he looked at the trussed-up man on the bed—whose eyes glared hideously at him in the moonlight, and said, in a whisper:

"I told you I'd explain."

And he did, rapidly.

"I regret having to leave you like this," he went on, "but it won't be for long, I trust," he added grimly. And, before he went, he tied the other's arms and legs to the head and foot of the bedstead.

Then he got out of the window, carefully descended the ladder, and made for the bicycle lying on the drive. He had not ridden a bicycle for years, but he managed to mount it, not noticing that the lamp had gone out, and made his way down the drive—the moonlight was strong now—to the open road. He hesitated a moment here, not knowing which direction to take, but finally chose the right, and spun along in hopes of finding a house or village. What he did find, after a mile's ride, was a policeman on night patrol.

"Here—get off—you—dismount!"

He did.

"Where's your light?"

"Oh, never mind the light. You're just the man—"

"I must ask for your name and address, please."

"I'm the Bishop of Frattenbury, and I live at the Palace—Frattenbury."

The policeman gaped at the strange, hatless figure, but he gaped still more before

the Bishop had done with him. Then he became a man of action. This was a big business, with possible promotion.

"I know the house, sir—only recently been taken by a tall, thin man—wears spectacles."

"That's the man."

"There's no time to be lost."

"Where are we?"

"Within half a mile of East Frimley. There's a post-office telephone there; I'll ring up the superintendent at Wynebury. May I borrow your bike, sir?"

"Certainly. I'll follow on."

"Straight along the road, sir!" And he was off.



The Bishop of Frattenbury told the Dean afterwards, in confidence, that he was afraid he experienced an almost vindictive pleasure in giving evidence against the gang of forgers that was so neatly trapped that night at East Frimley. Modesty forbade his adding that he had received a warm tribute of praise from high police quarters for capturing, single-handed, one particular arch-villain who had long been wanted.

"You see," he said to the Dean, with that grim humour for which he was noted, "I owed them one for preventing me from keeping an appointment. I *did* manage to get to the Conference at Nettlewick—but I was very late."

"And how about this man you knew—Royston?" asked the Dean.

"They never found him. It must have been he I saw leaving the house just before I made my escape. I'm glad, in a sense, he got away. He was the only one who seemed to feel any compunction when they proposed to—well, to put me to considerable inconvenience. I think that's why he ran away."

The Dean looked at him curiously. The Bishop had not told him quite all.

"You were in great danger, I think, Bishop?"

The Bishop lighted his cigar thoughtfully.

"Do you remember that conversation we had the night I was dining with you—the night all this happened? Yes? Well—thank God, I didn't compromise with the circumstances. But I don't want a test quite so severe again."



Children Round the World

The Camera and Child-life

By

Alexander G. Stewart

Children are the same round the world—and yet different. This interesting study of child life has been made by one who has circled the globe in search of his material.

ARENT foreigners funny people?" That is the thought uppermost in your mind when you are traveling. That, too, is just what the many strange people along the way are thinking and saying about you as you go stalking by with your stiff-looking clothes and your awkward, noisy shoes, eternally tugging that devil's machine with that single glassy eye in front; that mysterious black box, which takes away a part, the best part, perhaps, of the unlucky one who is foolish enough to stand still when it looks at him. These ubiquitous foreigners, with their eternal cameras, come close to you, and before you know it—click, biff, and a part of you is undoubtedly gone for ever; you really never do feel quite the same again.

This is very nearly the consensus of opinion the world over; that is what those shrill cries mean, as the kiddies scamper to cover, in almost any land that you can name. That is why good travel pictures are so hard to obtain. That is why a hunter of types—children types especially—must have the patience of Job, a quickness that is electric, and a "smiling front" that could sell three penny Japanese fans in a simoom at half a crown apiece. For these charmingly quaint and beautiful children are before you, for an instant, in an entrancing pose; then they are gone for ever, so far as

you are concerned—unless—unless you have sold your fan!

In going around the world from London we could, of course, start in either direction; though, perhaps, it would be nicer to follow the precedent of Columbus and to cross the Atlantic Ocean in the same direction as he did when he set out to find a quicker route to India, and to the almost legendary lands of China and Japan. In

our expedition we will not find a new continent, but we may touch within a few leagues of where he first landed in the New World. Cuba knew repeated visits from the great Christopher, and in the days of the Spanish Main Havana was the very centre of that lawless turmoil. We might well find a host of pictures from Cuba, but time presses and we dare not leave out our American cousin. In the United States children are energetic, with an eagerness and a zest for life which is displayed in everything they do; it is only afterwards—so we understand—that certain predominant traits are inclined to become over-accentuated.

To cross the wide Pacific Ocean without a stop would be almost unbearable, and so a day or so in Honolulu gives us a glimpse of tropical island life which will haunt us with warm, sensuous memories to our dying day. Vivid flowers and sparkling sand and water: with the greenest greens one ever sees anywhere!



Smiling childhood
from Singapore

CHILDREN ROUND THE WORLD



A handsome youth from Hawaii

Amongst all this beauty one stops and shudders—for it was here that Captain Cook was the honoured guest to a grim and gruesome feast.

It is strange but true, if you go west far enough you will find yourself in the Far East! This happens on the Pacific Ocean just before you get to Japan. There is no race suicide in Japan: children are decidedly wanted and are in evidence on every occasion. In some respects all children are very much alike. For instance, children like sweets the world over: "candy on a stick," the old-fashioned lollypop, is a universal confection, and the vendor of this toothsome dainty is as prime a favourite in the parks of Japan as his British contemporary could possibly be on a Bank Holiday on Hampstead Heath.

One day I noticed, standing a little way from me, watching me "bag" some children at a candy counter, a lad with a baby strapped to his back. A glance at him told me he was "camera shy." He seemed very sure that I could never catch him napping, and this goaded me to make a try. I de-

liberately turned my back on him and, poking the lens of my camera out from underneath my arm, I pretended to be engaged in photographing something going on down the street. Click! He blinked and ran away. Of course, he *knew* that I had not taken *his* picture, but he wasn't going to "stick around" and take any chances, no siree! Not while he was minding his precious little brother he was not. This method has yielded me splendid results, and I look on it as a prime, though far too little used, asset to a reflecting camera.

True Classic Beauty

Occasionally in Japan you come across faces of true classic beauty, if you judge them from an Oriental standpoint; their rare colouring and almost camellia-like loveliness cannot help but claim your interest; though you finally come to the conclusion that they are not really as charming as the children at home—just different, decidedly different, that is all.

But for all that the Japanese care so much for their children that they have a special god named Anari to watch over them. They tie little infant aprons around his neck, with a prayer to him to guide the footsteps of their loved little ones. It might be added that he is a "naughty" god, who well might harm—and he is "bribed" more often not to injure than he is really to protect. The quaint custom of putting two little furry ears on a baby's cap so that gods of this nature, thinking



Typical U.S.A. children



"Baaksheesh!" the eternal cry of the youth of Egypt and Palestine



An artist's model at Naples



A Bethlehem boy



"We are Seven" : from sunny Japan



Smiling children from Ceylon

THE QUIVER

they are little animals, will pass them by still prevails in most of the countries of the Far East.

Unusual Pictures from China

China is not so pleasant a country to travel in as Japan; but a hardy traveller will welcome the opportunities for unusual pictures that present themselves at every turn.

Canton is a huge, restless city, and with its teeming river life discloses problems which are not only photographic. Shanghai, with its quaint, walled, native city and its too new European one, is an interesting study in opposites. Here one can find subjects which range from what the Chinese poetically term a Moon Gate to a gorgeous tea-house in the centre of an artificial lake: paved streets, policemen, and even office buildings.

China is such a huge country that one could not name every part of it; but, generally speaking, the people in the north are

larger and more sombre than those of the south. Their temples seem to have fallen into disuse, just as if they were waiting for the coming of a new religion.

One day I saw a little mite in a deserted temple yard peering at me from underneath the sheltering paw of a stone god-guardian. He made a picture that Parrish would have liked to have handled: symbolic, Oriental, and reeking with that weird, nameless spell of the East.

Into the Tropics

Sailing from Hong Kong, we strike directly south into the tropics. Coming to Singapore, we draw to within a few miles of the Equator; the children wear fewer clothes here, and it is an example a traveller faint would follow.

We pass through the Malacca Straits and Penang, noted for its spices, and head for Colombo. Ceylon is one of the beauty spots of the world, and the natives are happy and prosperous.

Into the Mediterranean

There was smallpox in Aden when we arrived; this is the southernmost point of Arabia. Since we could not go ashore, it relieved the tedium of ship life to have a few young fellows come aboard and entertain us with some astonishing native dances, and one of them dived for coins with a full half-dozen sharks in plain sight swimming in circles about the boat. From Aden we traversed the Red Sea and the Suez Canal, and came into the beautiful Mediterranean.

To me there is no spot on the earth's surface so thought-compelling as Bethlehem; and at times one sees in the natives a sedate and dignified bearing with a rare, sweet mildness, as if they realize the honour bestowed upon them to live and be in the town of the Nativity.

The little kiddies of Jerusalem demand "Baaksheesh"—which, of course, means "money"—in a persistent and doleful manner. It is a custom which prevails here, and is rather trying to the traveller. A donkey-boy of Cairo will run all the way to the Pyramids as fast as his donkey will.



The spell of the East: China

CHILDREN ROUND THE WORLD

You are supposed to ride the donkey, and he is supposed to keep it going. A donkey and a donkey-boy often have differences of opinion; but, for all that, they certainly do love to be *photographed*!—for a consideration, and it's worth it.

The Home of the Ragamuffin

Naples is the home of the ragamuffin, the picturesque gamin, and the precocious artist-model with the drooping eyes. It is truly a beautiful city, with beautiful, talented people to inhabit it; but they have far too little pride—or is it cleanliness, perhaps?

How different are the children of northern Italy. They are studious, and even though their clothes are patched, poverty has never reached their natures; theirs is the true-born independence and pride descended from the Caesars.

In Berlin, strange to say, children seem uninteresting and colourless; all cut from the same material, and that material typically German.



A Dutch study



A back view of the youth of Germany

Eager and Happy

In Belgium the children are eager and happy; they watched us with great interest as we drifted by along many delightful canals. Belgium and Holland have more to offer the motor-boat tourist than any other two countries of the world, for the square foot of map. It is a small boat's paradise, with a never-ending chain of enchanting waterways. The children of Holland are picture-book children, almost too good to be true—until you discover that they dress for the pennies that they "pick up" by posing for pictures. They do not hesitate to correct you in your photographic technique if they feel that you are slighting their pictorial possibilities in any way. Jackie Coogan may have been photographed oftener than these cunning rascals, but I am very sure that he will never "know" as much about the way "it" should be done if he lives to be a hundred years! One day I was using an old-fashioned tripod camera, and I avoided a rather serious

THE QUIVER



A merry pair from Holland

argument and even, I am afraid, censure by showing them that my pictures *were all upside down*. And it was quite futile to hope for any results this time. It was really too bad! But since the pictures were undoubtedly spoiled, there was nothing to do about it. One little chap condescended to pose for me, just to show me how much I had missed. He hoped that I might be tempted to return on a future date to photograph him with a "good" camera. I insisted on giving him a small "advance,"

because I had discovered a secret process by which one can take a picture upside down and turn it right side up in finishing. In fact, most of my exposures are done in this seemingly inane fashion as a regular routine. I would rather hear a person scream: "Why, it's upside down!" than almost any other "music" I know of. There is absolutely no reason for either of these peculiarities—mostly, I should say, because the obvious cannot be peculiar.

To regain our dignity. Holland really has many corners where you see grave, sturdy, wholesome children; and you still see and hear the noisy, romantic-looking shoes that we always love to hear go "clatter-clatter," and to read about! And yet, I fancy, would dislike extremely to have to wear for any length of time—especially for our best on Sunday!

The British Child

And now, before we know it, we are back in London—the biggest and the best city in all the world; where the children are brightest, and the best behaved, and do not mind the least bit having their photographs taken. After one good long look around at these purely British products, I am very sure that we did not have to travel a single step to find the best and dearest children in all the world. But, anyway, "Aren't foreigners funny people?"



Back to old England: six unconventional maidens



Italian peasant boys from the Eternal City

Coughs and Colds

A Timely Talk

By

Dr. C. W. Saleeby, F.R.S.E.

ONE may cough to conceal boredom, or momentary embarrassment, or because one has wax in the ear, or malignant disease of the lungs. It is merely a symptom, an outward thing that may have any of a hundred meanings, and the first act of wisdom is to inquire into its cause. If we do not, but merely ask for some sweetish, sticky, brown stuff out of a bottle, called "cough mixture," we have abandoned reason and science, and are, to put it bluntly, playing the fool. The day of such substitutes for the real science and art of medicine is done, or should be.

Don't Leave It

My advice to the reader is that, in general, whatever a cough means, we ought to know about it. We ought not to be satisfied to let it remain, even though it gets no worse. We ought not to cough; if we do, something needs attention. Even the chronic "winter cough" of the elderly, though they may come to take it for granted, is to be deplored, and should be intelligently tackled. That, of course, is the task of the doctor who sees the case. I treat nobody in any circumstances whatever—not of my own household even; and the reader cannot get medical advice from me, even if he be so generous as to write for it, on the assumption that I possess the gifts of omniscience. But I give good advice now when I say that a cough should be inquired into and dealt with.

Let me note the special case of a kind of toneless cough, associated with loss of voice. If this persists for more than a very few days, it should be considered by an expert who examines the throat. It may herald—in people of middle life and after—very serious disease, and early diagnosis in such cases often makes the difference between life and death. But, alas, the public is not instructed in these matters, and often delays until it is too late.

Only the doctor who sees the case can judge. The inexpert may measure the seriousness of a cough by the volume of noise which is produced. A loud and re-

sonant noise may earn the title of a "graveyard cough," and may mean nothing more than the subconscious desire of an hysterical girl for sympathy and attention. Another cough may be scarcely audible, and may portend the most serious changes in the voice-box, or the occurrence of the formidable pain in the chest which goes with pleurisy.

These medical details are submitted to the reader as evidence for my contention that only the expert can judge the meaning of a cough, and that the meaning, whatever it may be, demands inquiry in every case.

The "Common Cold"

So much for coughs; a very brief and summary statement, but sufficient. My principal concern is with the common cold, the far-too-common cold, for which our country is unfortunately notorious throughout the world, and which enjoys its ugly power to make us ugly and miserable and offensive—not least at this time of year.

There is no question that the cold in the head is commoner here than in, say, Italy or New Zealand, or, indeed, any other part of the world. It is a minor malady, perhaps; but we had better be cautious in relegating it to that category, for we have, perhaps, not reckoned with its *sequela*, as doctors call them; and often the sequel to the story involves a very unhappy ending, which nobody likes.

I have lately been at some pains to study the reasons why this malady, so much neglected by the public and by the medical profession, is so common amongst us, and my conclusion is that it is an excellent example of the preventable diseases, if we chose to take it as seriously as we should.

Doctors have done little more than invent a few scientific names and convict a few germs. The international scientific name for a "cold" is coryza (with the accent on the y). The most frequently encountered germ is a very small, round object, the cause of the horrid *catarrh*, or down-flow from the afflicted organ; and so

COUGHS AND COLDS

we call it the *Micrococcus catarrhalis*. And, of course, the germs are scattered when the patient sneezes and coughs, and to some extent, certainly, even when he speaks. Therefore, we may consider tackling colds as we tackle terrible infections, like the plague or leprosy; but this is almost impracticable and unreasonable. Nevertheless, an infectious germ disease ought to be prevented by the principle of isolation, of course; and much could be done if we were all agreed—including employers, of course—that the subject of a cold should absent himself from the society of his fellows, at least until the acute symptoms subside. Short of that, it is his duty not to cough or sneeze broadcast, but to do what he can with a handkerchief for the protection of his fellows.

Further, he should adopt the theory, for which there is much evidence, that we hear with our ears, and, therefore, that it is not necessary, when addressing a remark to anyone, to shoot it, at the shortest possible range, into his mouth and nose, as if *they* were the organs of hearing. They are not, but they are the organs in which the germs are liable to effect a most undesirable lodgment. This argument against talking into other people's noses is of general application—but pre-eminently to people who have colds, or who are not as scrupulously careful as we all should be about the cleanliness of the mouth, gums, and teeth. It is impossible to speak without producing a fine—or less fine—mouth-spray, which may contain objectionable germs. In loud speech such germs have been shown to be thrown as far as twelve feet. They do no harm in the ear, but are hateful in the nostrils, where, as we are told, God planted the breath of life.

Mouth Breathers

But, unfortunately, that is a fact which we forget. Nowhere on earth will you find so many mouth breathers as in our country. But it was *not* in the mouth that the breath of life was planted. The mouth is unfitted to deal with it. But the healthy nose is one of the most admirably adapted organs in the body. It is a filter, and keeps back both germs and dust and dirt which would otherwise enter the lungs. The bacteriologists, when they examine the air which has passed through the nose, find it thus filtered and safe. And the nose warms the air, or at least "takes the chill" off it, before it enters the lungs. This is a most

valuable service in winter. Again, the nose adds moisture to the air, if it be too dry, and thus prevents it from unduly drying the lungs.

The interior of the nose is perfectly contrived for these purposes. It is not a straight passage, as one might have thought best, but as tortuous as can be, in order to serve as a filter, and it is lined with mucous membrane, which is very loose, very richly supplied with warm blood, and very capable of altering its thickness, so that it may ever be able to perform its function of modifying the outer air in such a way as to make it veritably the breath of life when it enters the lungs.

All this wonderful provision we defeat when we breathe through the mouth. And for this, amongst other reasons, I formulate my advice: *Unless you have something to say or to swallow, your mouth should be shut—and very often then.*

Troubles from the Nose

But many people cannot breathe freely through both nostrils, and many more cannot breathe freely through either. What are they to do about it? They are, above all, the people who are liable to colds: and we learn that, for the prevention of colds, the first and most absolute necessity is to have a healthy nose. The unhealthy nose can neither defend the lungs, which is its proper duty, nor defend itself. The germs which enter it, and of which it should easily dispose—for the natural secretion of the healthy nose is an antiseptic—prey upon it. Hardly is one cold partially recovered from than another arrives, and after each attack the hapless organ is not less, but more, susceptible. The throat is liable to become involved, and then there is the risk that the blood and the whole body may be exposed to the chronic absorption of poisons from the infected area.

For this, the only effective remedy in many cases is surgical. I happen to be able to offer public advice on this matter with particular confidence and earnestness, because of my own personal experience. From childhood I was a subject of colds, even though I largely lived out of doors. They became worse and worse—and ever more frequent. One nostril latterly admitted air only with difficulty. I even began to have little wheezy noises in my chest. At last, I had sense enough to consult an expert student of the nose—a *rhinologist*, as we would call him (cf. *rhinoceros*, or nose-

THE QUIVER

horn). He advised an operation, but I might try a douche, and I did so for six months, with little use. Then he operated and gave me a new nose, free from morbid obstructions, free from "dead-ends," where secretions accumulated and went wrong, and germs could flourish. This was some seventeen years ago, and it transformed my life.

Cured by the Surgeon

Without the operation, I should very possibly have succumbed long ago to pneumonia or tuberculosis, thanks to the injury which my nose was doing to the lungs which it should have protected and served. Though required to travel much in infectious railway carriages, and exposed in that and other ways as the frequently itinerant lecturer must be, I scarcely ever have a cold, and I owe the change to the operation which gave me back a healthy nose. My readers know well that I am no lover of the knife, and that for many years I have publicly condemned the use of the knife in so-called surgical tuberculosis, which the blessed sunlight can cure and should have prevented. Perhaps they will attach all the more weight to my present advice that no victim of colds should rest content until he is assured that no operative treatment can clear the nose and throat—which is all that is required in hosts of cases.

Our Faces Are Altering

Thus we are able to answer the question why we should be specially plagued by the far too common cold in our British cities. Our faces, to tell the truth, are altering in shape. How often in the streets do we see a man with a typical John Bull face? But when, abroad, we meet a man with a narrow face and protruding nose and mouth, we rightly guess him to be a fellow countryman. Our famous anthropologist, Sir Arthur Keith, has written upon the subject of the degeneration of the English face; but, one ought to say, the *urban* English face, and, indeed, the same change is going on north of the Tweed. The narrow face goes with a narrow palate and a narrowed nose; and whilst the narrow palate probably means that our tenors are unlikely to have voices of the Italian quality, the narrowed nose means lowered resistance to

infection, and a happy hunting ground for the *micrococcus catarrhalis* and its brother marauders.

The Sunlight Question Again

To this national disadvantage add, the smoke above our cities, which cuts off the best and safest and oldest of all antiseptics, the sunlight, and especially the ultra-violet rays, just about half an octave, as a musician would say, beyond the violet limit of our vision. Again, therefore, I indict the plague-cloud, as John Ruskin called it long ago, above our cities. In the presence of sunlight, playing upon the body, and distributed to it by means of fresh green food, our noses and faces would develop properly: and there would be fewer germs to attack them. We are sadly starved of both sunlight and the bone-making, sun-derived elements in our diet; and so we shall continue to be until we clear our skies and grow plenty of fresh green leaves in our own soil, with the aid of the precious fertilizers gained and saved from our coal when we learn to use it properly.

When We Huddle Indoors

Let me repeat with new and recent evidence, therefore, the assertion made elsewhere in past years that the lack of sunlight in our cities at this time of year is doubtless responsible for the customary epidemics of colds, in the various ways already indicated. Of course, the germs flourish when the great antiseptic is withdrawn. We huddle indoors and contract this infection, which is of the indoor, short-range type: not knowing, as we should, that, despite the silly and misleading name, we "catch cold" not outside the omnibus, but inside it. Colds and the other infections from nose and mouth to nose and mouth are unknown at Dr. Rollier's pioneer "School in the Sun," at Leysin. Children infect each other in our shadow schools, of course, but not at the seaside, nor wherever complete, unsullied sunlight is allowed to fall. In large measure, the common cold belongs to the category, characteristic of our country, which I have called by the name, now widely used, of the *diseases of darkness*. And once again enlightened man is called upon to repeat the creative word: Let There Be Light.



ANOTHER CINDERELLA

By
William C. Lengel

ENRICO PATRI was a teacher of singing. The sign on the door said as much. It said more. It said he was an exponent of the lost art of *bel canto*, which means, as you no doubt know, beautiful singing. And to listen to the voice of the young maestro as he accompanied himself in *solfeggio* exercises, you would agree that those sounds made sweet music, *bel canto* indeed.

Enrico, seated at the grand piano, and not more than twenty-eight, was a striking figure. The piano was so placed in relationship to the light that his curly black hair, his ivory-coloured skin, and sharp-cut features stood in clear silhouette, while his eyes always seemed a bit troubled, as if the beauty and emotion of the music he played found expression there.

At the opposite end of the room was an ancient highboy. On one wall hung a gorgeous tapestry, and the draperies at the windows were of yellow silk. A couch and two William and Mary chairs completed the equipment of the studio.

Enrico Patri owned none of these fine trappings. They were all front; in other words, pure bluff. The piano was rented, the couch and the chairs were being bought on instalment, while the tapestry and the highboy were simply a loan exhibit.

Enrico had learned that getting a fortune in this strange land of America, already overcrowded with vocal teachers, was not so easy after all; but he had learned in this country he now called his own that it would not do to let it be known that prosperity had not descended upon him, that he was struggling for a foothold, and that his foothold was extremely precarious.

He had advertised in the musical trade papers, and he had sent out announce-

ments, but the few pupils who had come to him were either without funds or without influence. That is, all except a strange, timid, flower-like girl who came for lessons every Thursday at 6.30 in the evening. Her name was Doris Kent—a self-confessed *débutante* of this season. But she was a girl whose ambition soared above the butterfly of the social whirl. That is the way she put it, at least.

When Enrico first saw her, he would never have guessed that she was a *débutante*. She looked so—well, shabby; her face was so thin, and she seemed so frail. Then she paid for each lesson in small bills and small coins, whereas the average wealthy society girl would either pay with a cheque or fail to pay at all. But Doris, sensing that Signor Patri questioned the incongruity between her social status and appearance, had explained.

"You see," she told him, "my father—he's in Wall Street, you know—is absolutely opposed to my having a career. Of course, I dislike to oppose his wishes—you don't think I'm doing wrong, do you?—but I simply *must* sing! Father is so strict I even have to slip out the servants' entrance to be sure I'll not be seen."

"Ah, me, it's such a pity to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth! 'Better to be poor and have freedom than to be rich and live only to follow rules,'" Miss Kent had sighed.

This was Miss Kent's lesson evening, and promptly at 6.30 there was a timid knock on the door.

"Come," called Signor Patri.

As timid as was her knock entered Miss Doris Kent.

"Ah, my little *prima donna*, a very good evening," said Enrico.

THE QUIVER

Miss Kent smiled and lifted her eyes shyly. "Oh, Mr. Patri, you shouldn't say things you don't mean—calling me a *prima donna*."

"Sure, yes, that's right—*prima donna*," insisted Enrico.

"Oh, Mr. Patri, do you really think I'm going to sing—be a great singer?" Her voice was tremulous, and she leaned forward, breathless.

"Sure, yes, that's right. If you study and work hard, you will be a great singer," said Enrico.

"Oh, I'm so happy. I do so want to be a great singer, to give joy to a lot of people, and have them laugh and cry because they are happy when they hear me sing. Oh, Mr. Patri, can't you just picture them? Tell me, how soon will I be a real singer?"

"Soon, maybe, if you study and work hard and practise. All the time I must tell you to practise and work, and work and practise. Now, did you do your exercise one hour each day?" demanded Enrico.

Little Miss Kent shook her head in sorrow and in shame. "I'm so sorry, Mr. Patri, but you see father has been home from Wall Street every day with—with the—with the gout, and I couldn't practise with him there, so I guess I'm not very well prepared."

Signor Enrico Patri tried to look severe. "But that won't do. You must work. You must do better next time."

He seated himself at the piano, while Doris took off her hat. That, in effect, was what she did, but with what poetry and grace of motion! And how lovely the gesture as she tossed her head to loosen the mass of curls that had been pressed down by her close-fitting toque.

Enrico was only human and, being a musician, a little more human than most of us, a child of passion and emotion, and each time he watched Doris in the graceful act of removing her hat and shaking her curls so tantalizingly, he could hardly resist the impulse to rush madly to her and take her in his arms. She was so tempting, so desirable. But what poor, struggling teacher of singing dare even think such thoughts, let alone put them into action? Was she not a queen of society, come to him *incognito*? So, instead, Enrico let his hands fall on the keys of the piano and shattered the quiet air with a crashing chord.

Then he played while she sang from her

exercises. It was tedious; Enrico was stern, critical, impatient. Doris was on the verge of tears when they finished.

"Oh, when are you going to let me have a song to sing?" she cried. "I'm getting so I hate those old exercises."

"Song!" he said. "A song, you want. That's the way with you Americans—always so much hurry. Here, quick, you say, make me a great singer in two months; give me songs to sing. Why—"

"Please, Mr. Patri, please let me have a song. It would make it so much easier," and she put her hand appealingly on his arm.

"Yes, yes, you can have a song—next time; you can have anything." And he grasped her two tiny hands in his and squeezed them so tightly, she cried, "Oh, Mr. Patri!"

"I'm sorry," he said; then, very formal again: "Please work hard and practise, and when you come again I give you a song."

She put on her hat, and Enrico tried not to watch her, and he was not aware that she was ready until he felt her at his side.

"You're not angry with me because I didn't have a better lesson, are you?" she asked, and she held out her hand.

"No," he said; "it's you I thought might be angry with me."

"Oh, no," she smiled. "I think—I think you're very nice. Good night, Mr. Patri."

He wondered why he should stand in such awe of this timid child, he, Enrico Patri, the hero of a hundred conquests. Yet he trembled, like some boy in his first amorous encounter. He wanted to touch her soft cheeks with his finger-tips, to caress her tenderly, lovingly. Why should he not take her to him, hold her in his arms and whisper to her?

But what a barrier were those soft, innocent eyes! He felt abashed even to think such thoughts, and all he could say was, "Good night, little *prima donna*," and her eyes were shining as she left the studio.

On the piano he found the four one-dollar bills and the two silver half-dollars she had left to pay for her lesson. And he fingered the bills tenderly before putting them in his pocket to keep company with the few other remaining dollars that constituted his wordly monetary fortune.



Doris disdained the servants' entrance

ANOTHER CINDERELLA

when she got home. She walked right in the front portals and straight upstairs to her room. Cheerily she called out:

"Never mind helping me, Céleste. I'll change myself. You run right along to the movies."

Then she sank down on her little bed, in her sorry little room in the big, crowded tenement house—and cried.

Because there was no servants' entrance to the house Doris lived in. She had no gouty father. She had no father at all, and Céleste, the maid, was real only as dreams are real.

"Oh dear," sobbed Doris. "It's grand to pretend to be a Society girl, but it would be much grander to be one. And I do wish I had a piano so I could work hard and be a great singer. It's so hard to remember just the notes those 'mi's' and 'ah's' and 'oo's' are begun on. Wish I could get a job in the Ten Cent Store at the music counter."

Suddenly Doris sat up straight on her bed. She forgot that she hadn't had any supper and wasn't likely to get any. "That," she said solemnly, "was an inspiration. I will get a job—no, a position—at the music counter at the Ten Cent Store. Then I can sing all the latest hits, and maybe the girl who plays the piano will play my exercises for me, too."

Doris was so excited that she forgot she was hungry, but also it was hard for her to get to sleep. It was late when she awoke the next morning—too late, in fact, for her to go to her regular job in the candy factory, where she was a chocolate dipper. She knew she would have her wages docked for being late, so she decided to devote this day, regardless of the money lost, to finding a job nearer to her heart's desire.

Doris put on her best and only Sunday dress, and as often happens in real life—much oftener than not—she found an employment manager of a Ten Cent Store, who listened with sympathetic attention to her reasons for wanting just the position she did. Not only did he give her a place, but the pay was fourteen dollars a week, two dollars more than she had been paid to dip chocolates.

The girl who worked at the counter with Doris was named Tillie, and the way Tillie could play the current hits was marvellous to behold—or to listen to. She would prop up on the piano a new song she had never seen before, and she had no sooner played the first measure than she could almost

close her eyes and play the rest. That's how simply popular songs are written.

Tillie was blonde and vigorous and capable. She knew when a smile meant business and when it was an invitation to flirt. There was always a good sales sheet at the end of the perfect days at Tillie's music counter.

Doris seemed to know better than to try the society-girl-gruff-father-opposed-to-a-career story on Tillie, so when Tillie took her to lunch the first day, she confessed her ambitions, of wanting to practise and sing the songs, and about her vocal lessons and her vocal teacher.

"Why, that's great, kid," said Tillie. "Smoking cigarettes has just about finished my voice. So you can't sing too much to suit me. But you're a pretty kid, and I'd advise you to watch out for that vocal teacher of yours."

Then Doris told Tillie that there was no danger, because Signor Enrico Patri regarded her as a wealthy society girl, far beyond the reach of his dreams. Sometimes she wished she hadn't pretended as she had; it would be wonderful to be loved by one so handsome and so distinguished as Enrico Patri, exponent of the lost art of *bel canto*.



Doris was in a glow when she went for her next lesson. Tillie had praised her voice; customers had asked for encores; she was sure now that she could sing. Her thin, pale little face was flushed with excitement as she knocked on the studio door, and while she entered timidly at Enrico's bidding, her smile was not so timid, and her eyes were bright.

Her best Sunday dress was nothing like the poor, drab little suit she had worn before when she came for her lessons. This frock was light and colourful; it was like the springtime.

"How pretty is my little *prima donna*!" cried Signor Patri.

"Oh, do you think so?" smiled Doris. "Why, this is just a little old thing I intended giving to Céleste, my maid, when they began wearing shorter skirts again. But, of course, I'm glad you think it's pretty."

"Sure, pretty, very pretty," admired Signor Patri, and he could not keep his eyes off her. "But let us hope your lesson will be as good as you are pretty."

"Oh, it's going to be a great surprise for

THE QUIVER



"Signor Enrico Patri tried to look severe. 'But that won't do. You must work. You must do better.'"

you," said Doris. "I've worked so hard and practised so long and faithfully. Father and Mr. Morgan—J. P. Morgan, the banker, you know—and Mr. Schwab, and some other big men in Wall Street, all went away on a big consolidation, so I had

lots and lots of time just with my own beloved piano."

"Good! Now; Mi-mi-mi-mi-mi. Now: Mi, mi, mi, mi, mi."

And so on for fifteen minutes, and each minute as Doris sang Signor Enrico Patri's

ANOTHER CINDERELLA



"He seated himself at the piano, while Doris took off her hat. That, in effect, was what she did, but with what poetry and grace of motion!"—p. 350

enthusiasm grew. A voice! A voice! He, Enrico Patri, exponent of the art of *bel canto*, had discovered a voice! And he offered a prayer of thanks to the Virgin.

"Do you really think I can sing?" Doris asked timidly.

"Ah, *signorita*, like an angel," he whispered.

"Now, won't you give me a song?" begged Doris. "It would be such a relief from those exercises."

"A song, yes," said Signor Patri; "many

THE QUIVER

songs you will sing. Before you or the world is much older you will sing the great songs."

Doris was thrilled—every inch of her.

"Oh, Mr. Patri, you are such a romancer," she said.

"No, it is all true," he said. "In days to come, perhaps, it may be my good fortune to be remembered as the teacher of the famous Doris Kent."

"Oh, Mr. Patri!" breathed Doris.

"But come," said Mr. Patri. "We are losing time. You want a little song to sing, to keep your interest up. Well, let's see what we can find best for your voice just now."

He rummaged through a loose, disorderly stack of sheet music lying on the back of his piano. "Ah," he said, "here is a little song that I will sing for you, and if you like it, I will teach it to you. It is called '*Warum?*' In English that means 'Why?' It is very simple, this little song, and therefore it is very hard to sing. It is sad, so I sing it when I am most happy. Listen——"

The shadows deepened in the room as he sang the plaintive, sadly-sweet music that has given eternal voice to the outpouring of a lonely poet's heart! That pleading, ever-inquiring note of a lover's insistent why! why! why!

It made Doris cry, and when he finished Signor Patri patted her head gently and as gently kissed her on both cheeks. They both stood there a moment, self-conscious, embarrassed, then Signor Patri went back to the piano to teach Doris her first real song.

It had seemed so simple, so easy, when he had sung it, but Doris found it was not easy at all—that is, at first—but presently she sang it in such a way that Signor Patri was again all in a glow. And now Doris shared his enthusiasm.

"Yes, I am satisfied!" he cried. "I will make you a great singer. But once a week for lessons—that is not enough. We must work; we will study Italian, French, German. We will have a lesson every day, yes?"

"Oh, that would be wonderful!" cried Doris—then her heart suddenly seemed to fail her.

A lesson every day; six days a week. At five dollars a lesson. Quickly she multiplied six lessons by five dollars. Thirty dollars! And she earned fourteen.

"No, Mr. Patri," she said kindly but firmly, "you carried me off my feet, but

what you suggest is impossible. My father, you know——"

"Let me see your father!" cried Enrico. "I will tell him what a daughter he has that he does not know. I don't care how many millions he is worth; his millions are nothing compared with the gold of your voice. He must not stop you. Come, we go together to see him now."

"No, Mr. Patri," said Doris. "We must be patient. It just can't be as you say right now. Maybe a little later. But we will work together—and I *will* be a great singer, and I *will* tell all that I owe it to you. *Au revoir*, Mr. Patri, until next week."

And Enrico Patri poured out in beautiful melody on his piano the longings of his soul that he dared not express in words to his little song-bird. It was not until some time later that he found the five-dollar bill Doris had left, and when he put it in his pocket, it found no company there.



Doris told Tillie all about it the next morning.

"Sure he's not just stringing you?" asked the suspicious Tillie.

"Why, Tillie, you yourself said I could sing."

"And he wants you to come for lessons every day?"

"Yes."

"At five dollars per lesson?"

"Yes."

"Then that's the answer. He's out for the coin," said Tillie.

"Oh, no, he's not," defended Doris. "We didn't say anything about money. Why, he thinks I have more money than I know what to do with. Oh, Tillie, when he told me I was a great singer, he kissed me on both cheeks!"

"Ah, ha! So he kissed you, did he? Well, then, that's his game. Look out for yourself is what I say," said Tillie.

"Oh, Tillie, you don't know him. He's so handsome and so kind."

"Hopeless," said Tillie. "Now listen, kid, that may be all right enough, but it isn't getting you anywhere. You can take vocal lessons till your throat is wore out. The main thing is to get out and sing—join the Salvation Army, or a choir—or something."

"But the first thing you've got to do is put up a front—not with a Wall Street magnate for a father, but with clothes. You've got to get some glad rags."

ANOTHER CINDERELLA

"How?" asked Doris.

"By giving up your lessons!" said Tillie.

"Oh, but I can't do that!" cried Doris. "I'm just getting started."

"Yes, started and going nowhere in particular," said Tillie. "Now, listen; it's nearly summer time. No one takes vocal lessons in summer. You just tell your Enrico Patri that you can't go on for the summer, but that you'll resume in the fall when you get back from Bar Harbour. We'll put away some of that lesson money and buy some Broadway scenery. Then we'll make that voice of yours pay for its own lessons when you go back a little later."

"Oh, Tillie! You make everything seem so easy and so wonderful," and Doris, who so short a time ago had only a job of dipping chocolates, and her dreams, could easily be forgiven a few happy tears. Because now she had a fairy godmother in Tillie, a fairy godfather in Signor Patri, and she could sing to her heart's content.

But Tillie, being a more practical person, said: "Come out of it, kid; cut the weeps. Here comes a customer."

It seemed to Doris that she could never force herself to tell Mr. Patri that she would have to give up her lessons for the summer. She rehearsed in her best society manner the fable of how her cruel millionaire father insisted on the silly custom of going to Bar Harbour for the summer, when everyone knew that New York itself was as comfortable as any summer resort.



But she found the way made unexpectedly easy for her. When she was bidden to enter the studio of Enrico Patri, teacher of singing, she almost backed out again, and she did pause long enough to look at the name on the door to be sure she was in the right place.

The room was vacant—or nearly so. Gone was the magnificent grand piano. Gone was everything except the highboy and the tapestry on the wall. And Signor Patri himself stood disconsolately looking out of the window.

He waited for her to cross to him, then he greeted her.

"Ah, *signorita*, I am sad. You see"—and he encompassed the bareness of the room in a sweep of his arm—"I leave for the summer. Please excuse me. I forgot to tell you that I go to your resort—what you call it?—Newport, yes, Newport. So many of

my pupils go there. You, perhaps, you go to Newport for the summer, too, yes?"

"Oh, Mr. Patri, isn't that the strangest thing! Here I was coming to tell you that we were going to Bar Harbour. I'm so sorry—and just when we were getting along so famously. It's too bad."

"Promise that you will work hard while I am gone," said Mr. Patri.

"Yes; I will work hard, and I will think of you, and I'll miss you dreadfully," said Doris.

"You will think of me?" smiled Enrico Patri. "And you will miss me?"

"Yes; lots and lots," said Doris.

"Ah, *signorita*, you are so sweet, so charming. You make me very, very happy. Come, give me your hand. I kiss it—so. I hold it tight. I put it to my heart—so. Can you not feel my heart beat? Can you not feel it beat very, very fast? Ah, *signorita*, must I tell you that I love you?"

"Oh, Mr. Patri, you mustn't; you just don't understand. You mustn't love me; you mustn't think of me that way at all. Because, you see, it would be wrong. First, there is my father; he would never consent—and then there is my career. No, Mr. Patri, you go away for the summer and you will forget your hopeless infatuation. When you return in the fall, we'll resume our lessons."

"Please forgive me if I've hurt you, Mr. Patri; I didn't mean to, but it's all for the best—as you will learn. Good-bye, Mr. Patri, and I wish you a successful summer season."

"Ah, *signorita*, you break my heart!" cried Enrico Patri; but Doris was certain, as she softly slipped out of the room, that it was her own heart that was more nearly broken, because no heart could beat so fast as hers was beating and remain whole.

The landlord requesting Enrico Patri to vacate his studio for non-payment of rent after the instalment-house man had already denuded the place seemed a sad joke to Signor Patri. Without funds he could not rent another studio. With neither a studio nor a piano he could give no vocal lessons. Is America cold to young genius? Or was young genius in the person of Enrico Patri merely impracticable?

Without a place he could call his own and be proud of, he began to feel that he had no safe anchorage. He became unsure of himself. What if he could find no employment? New York suddenly seemed so big and friendless! A great fear came into

THE QUIVER

the heart of Enrico Patri. What was he to do?



By the end of July Doris had saved fifty-five dollars, the amount she would have paid for eleven vocal lessons. It was the most money she had ever had at one time in her life, and the thought of spending such a huge sum almost frightened her.

Doris had always bought her clothes at second-hand stores, and naturally she thought it would be in these places that she would outfit herself again.

But Tillie told her what every wise New York woman knows, which is that at the end of the seasons the smart Fifth Avenue specialty shops have not-too-well-advertised sales to clear out their stocks, at prices that are ridiculously low.

So, for the first time in her life, Doris, guided by Tillie, did her shopping on the Avenue. Unaccompanied, she would have feared even to enter these haughty little shops. But however fearfully she may have entered, she came out brave and radiant.

Within two days Doris was the possessor of a tailored suit, an afternoon frock, hats for both costumes, silk stockings, pumps, and oxfords. She had spent exactly seventy-one dollars—sixteen dollars over her capital, which Tillie insisted on advancing to her.

"Don't worry," said Tillie. "I'll get it back, once from you and several times in commissions on sales at the music counter before you desert me for your career."

"But I'll never desert you, Tillie dear," said Doris.

"Well, I'll see that you do," said Tillie. "Kid, now you look like a million dollars. When you get used to these swell rags, you'll be wearing them and finer ones as if you'd been doing it all your life. Kid, you were born to look swell."

Doris made the Ten Cent Store gasp. She made it gossip. Then at noon time Tillie played Doris's vocal exercises, while Doris sang them. The store manager, who at first could hardly believe his ears, started for the music counter to put a stop to such nonsense. But before he reached the counter he found that it had become the most popular department in the store. Shoppers crowded the aisles to hear this clear, sweet voice. And no one would have recognized in the slim, lovely, self-possessed girl the colourless Doris of a few days before. When

she finished with the exercises, Doris sang the latest hits from Tin Pan Alley. People who had had no idea of buying songs called for her to sing other current popular numbers, and in no time at all the counter and shelves were almost cleared of stock.

"That," said Tillie modestly, "was great head-work. Tillie, you ought to get a rise. And didn't the kid knock 'em off their feet?"

Not only that morning did Doris knock 'em off their feet, but she did the same thing later in the afternoon. This time the Tin Pan Alley music publishers and their song pluggers were on hand, all of them trying to persuade Tillie to have Doris push their wares.

They wanted to meet Doris, but Tillie would not have it. She hinted that Doris was a society girl, the daughter of a well-known Wall Street magnate; she let them infer that Doris was a foreigner who knew only the English words of songs she had taught her. She made Doris so mysterious that one paper printed a story about "The Prima Donna of the Ten Cent Store."

It was on this day, when the crowd had finally gone on its way after the impromptu recital, that a pudgy little man approached the counter.

"I should like to meet the little lady," he told Tillie.

"Nothing doing," said Tillie. "She's not receiving this afternoon."

"But I am Herman Steck."

"Say on," said Tillie.

"Of the Consolidated Vaudeville Exchange."

"Oh, yes?" said Tillie; but her heart was almost in her mouth.

"Has the little lady done any professional work?" asked Mr. Steck.

"Does she sing like an amateur?" asked Tillie.

"Young woman," said Mr. Steck, "I don't have much time going to Ten Cent Stores to listen to unknowns."

"Well, on your way then," said Tillie. "Nobody asked you."

"Listen, lady," persisted Mr. Steck, "there would be three hundred a week for the little girl and her accompanist."

Tillie kept her composure remarkably well.

"Now you're saying something. Bring on the papers," she said.

"Good," said Mr. Steck. "Now we'll first have a try-out up by the Acme Theatre in the Bronx. I want to see how the little

ANOTHER CINDERELLA

lady looks on the stage; then we will fix up an act for the Big Time."

"That sounds reasonable," said Tillie.

Whereupon Mr. Steck took a dignified departure, and Tillie went to break the news to Doris.

"Kid," she said, "this is not a riddle I'm asking you, but don't be afraid: What would you do with three hundred dollars a week?"

"Three hundred dollars a week?" echoed Doris.

"Yes, less the salary of a pianist, income tax, railroad fare, tips, et cetera. To cut a long story short, kid, you are in vaudeville, you are a queen of the footlights, you are—good heavens, the kid's fainted!"



It should not be thought that Doris was unmindful of her success. What healthy, normal girl of nineteen, bubbling over with the joy of life, conscious not only of nature's gift of a beautiful voice, but of physical beauty as well, would not accept such homage as was her due? So, all a-flutter inside, Doris talked calmly enough with Tillie, now that she had recovered from her first shock.

"Oh, but I do wish Mr. Patri could know about this; I'm sure he would be proud. And oh, Tillie, how am I ever going to repay you! Of course, you will come and play for me. You will be my accompanist, won't you, Tillie?"

"Not on your life," said Tillie. "Why, kid, I can't play the piano—not like it would have to be played for you when you get an act fixed up for yourself—with a lot of high-brow grand opera songs. You want a classy act—and you'll have to have a real piano player.

"Now, I know how you feel about it, kid, but even if I could play as well as you think—which I can't—I wouldn't leave this New York town and go on the road for a million dollars. I haven't got much of a job, but I get so jolly lonesome for a sight of Fifth Avenue and Broadway when I've gone for a week, I get the blues.

"Don't worry about that, though. Old man Steck will find a real Big Time artist to play for you."

"Oh, Tillie, that spoils half the fun of it. Why, I won't know how to get along without you any more."

"You'll get along all right, kid," said Tillie. "You'll go a long distance with that wonderful voice of yours and your

good looks. Why, you'll forget me in a year."

"Never, never, never!" protested Doris.

"Well, let's forget that part of it, then," said Tillie, "and practise on some songs for that try-out."

"Oh, dear," said Doris, "I'm getting to be afraid. It's not so hard singing here in the store, because that's only in fun. But in a theatre it's different. Oh, I do wish Mr. Patri was here to tell me whether I am placing my tones right. I do wish he could hear me!"

"Well, for goodness' sake!" cried Tillie. "You sing good enough for anybody, kid. The audience at the Acme Theatre won't know or care whether you produce your tones in your head or in your throat. All they'll think is, 'Gee, that's a swell kid, and she sure sings swell.' See! Now forget all this trained-voice business and sing like God intended you to."

"All right, Tillie," said Doris. "I'll do that, but do you think if I should make a success, and if Mr. Patri hears about it—and is proud of me—that maybe he will come to see me?"

"Why, you poor kid, if that's the way you feel about it, I'll give it him if he don't. It's terrible—this love stuff. Some kids fall for movie-actors; some for truck-drivers, and some for long-haired voice-teachers. Gee, it's fierce."

Whereupon Tillie wrote a letter addressed to Mr. Enrico Patri at Newport. It was returned to her by the post office, and she was not at all surprised. But she was mad.

"I knew that wretch was only kidding her, all along," she said.



At nine o'clock on the night of the try-out, a timid, shrinking, fearsome little girl appeared on the stage of the Acme Theatre before an audience that actually seemed annoyed at any interruption to its favourite indoor sport of watching movies of the great open spaces.

Tillie had agreed to play the accompaniments, and the one-man orchestra of the theatre had effaced himself.

Tillie was trembling as much as Doris. "Good heavens," she said, "the kid's going to collapse, sure's you're born."

She tried to catch Doris's eye, but Doris wasn't seeing anything just then. So Tillie began to play. And Doris sang. Her full-throated, glorious voice was thin and piping, and Tillie pounded hard on the

THE QUIVER

keys to cover her deficiencies. When the first song was finished, the audience applauded out of sheer pity for the timid little girl so shaken with stage fright.

Kind-hearted Mr. Steck, who had been through many such experiences and knew how Doris was suffering, thrust her out on the stage again.

She had insisted on singing the Tschai-kowsky song next. She argued that she would feel surer of herself, because Signor Patri had taught it to her, and it was the only song in which she had had professional coaching.

That was true enough, but when it came to the piano accompaniment, an accompaniment as important as the song, Tillie was not so sure of her part, so Doris half closed her eyes and tried to imagine herself back in the studio the evening she had first sung this lovely, despairing plaint of the broken-hearted poet:

"Oh, why are all the roses so pale,
My love, come tell me why?
Oh, why, with grasses once so hale,
Do violets droop and die?"

Now the audience was silent, wondering, expectant. But Doris was not on the stage of the Acme Motion Picture Theatre; only her physical self was there. In spirit she was singing to Enrico Patri, and it seemed the most natural thing in the world, when she began the last verse of the song, that to the thin accompaniment of the piano should be added the rich, sonorous tones of the organ. As Doris sang and glimpsed the organist in the dusk of the auditorium, she even fancied that it might be Enrico Patri. So she sang to him; she sang with her voice, her heart, her soul. She thought she would cry. But she was too exultant. She had achieved the ambition of her life. She had made others cry by the sheer beauty of her voice. She saw a woman in the audience blinking her eyes to keep back the tears. She knew Tillie was sobbing for happiness, and had she looked into the

wings she would have seen Mr. Steck using his handkerchief in a most suspicious manner.

The organ was so soft, so soothing:

"And I myself am so troubled and weak;
My love, why should this be?
Answer, my own, my beloved, speak—
Why hast thou parted from me?"

She held out her arms to the semi-invisible organist in a last despairing appeal, while he continued on with the heart-breaking conclusion of the melody. Then, as she retreated from the stage, she collapsed in the arms of Mr. Steck.

"Come, child, come," he said. "Listen! You have made a hit. Just hear them! They call this an ovation, my child. Go to them and bow, then throw them a kiss. Then you can go and sing to them some more. Sing anything now; they will not know if it is good or bad."

"But I wasn't singing for them!" cried Doris, after she had satisfied an insatiable audience. "I was singing to Mr. Patri. Oh, why couldn't he be here?"

"My little *prima donna*! I am so proud of you!" And there was Enrico Patri!

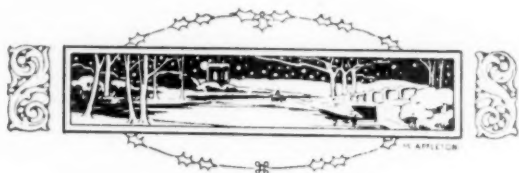
"Oh!" cried Doris. "You did know I was to sing here to-night. And you came all the way from Newport just to play for me! Oh, I'm so happy."

"No, *signorita*," said Enrico Patri. "I have not been in Newport. I have deceived you. I am what you call 'broke,' and here in this place I am the orchestra. I play the piano and the organ. Maybe, when luck comes some more, I have the studio again. You come, maybe, for lessons?"

"Yes, Mr. Patri, I'll be glad to; but first, you see, I'm going into vaudeville, and I'm glad you haven't got a studio, because now I can ask you to be my accompanist."

"A very good idea," said Mr. Steck.

"And I think it would be a better idea if we beat it," said Tillie to Mr. Steck, "and let these two tell each other what's really on their minds."



The Valentine Immortal

by
ROWLAND GREY

IT is a double-dyed error to place the fourteenth of February upon the long list of forgotten festivals. For has not genius delighted to honour St. Valentine by laying garlands of everlasting flowers upon his now neglected shrine?

Few of the daughters of to-day know anything of the history of the messengers of cupid putting dainty crinolined great grand-mamas in such a flutter. Roman damsels received love tokens at this auspicious date, long before Christianity made a vain effort to change the amatory nature of the holiday dedicated to Venus by associating it instead with a canonized bishop of whom little is known.

From Romantic Italy

It was not, however, Julius Cæsar and his legions who introduced the Valentine to our woad-clad ancestors, with baths, central heating and other luxuries. It had a charmingly romantic advent when a young French prince, taken prisoner at the Battle of Agincourt, was incarcerated in the Tower of London. There he enlisted his captivity by composing the Valentines long popular in France, and sending them to the lady—or ladies—of his choice. Like other poets, he was fond of reading his effusions aloud to the numerous visitors permitted by his courteous jailers. The new way of wooing speedily became the fashion. The King himself expressed a desire to see these Valentines, and the illuminated book of copies sent to him is said to be in the royal library to this day. Whether gallant Harry of Monmouth used them is an intriguing question. It is possible, seeing that he was unquestionably handier with a sword than with a pen.

For centuries afterwards, the Roman custom of drawing lots for Valentines was widely observed in England and Scotland. The original written tributes were soon metamorphosed into gifts of more or less

value. Curiously enough, in their latter days Valentines reverted to their former flimsy and sentimental form.

"The iron of our age has not entered the national soul so deeply after all," boasts the chronicler of a visit to "Cupid's Factory" writing in "All the Year Round" in 1863. This gentleman, who imitates the Dickensian touch rather happily, does much to establish this date as the apogee of the Valentine.

430,000 Valentines!

Somewhat earlier, Poet Laureate Southey records in one of his famous *Commonplace Books* that the post mistress at Kendal realized quite a handsome sum annually by the extra twopences she was legally allowed to demand for their delivery.

It is startling to read the statistics regarding the number of Valentines posted in 1862. Four hundred and thirty thousand is a big figure, yet these insatiate Victorians required another twenty thousand a year later.

Except for a Jeremiad over the fact that "the small glazed hearts and varnished flowers" used in large quantities were made in Germany, "though now being equalled in England," the report of "Cupid's Factory" is written in rose-coloured ink. It cost nearly three hundred pounds a week to run this highly perfumed business. The export trade was fast recovering the blow dealt to it by the American Civil War. The rush to the gold fields accounted for a boom in two-guinea Valentines printed on satin and embroidered with pearls. These elegant souvenirs were sent out to the diggers drawn incomparably for us in *Pouch* by rare John Leech. Presumably they returned them to their absent flames.

Cupid's Factory

The work in Cupid's Factory, all lace paper, silver and ardent vows, was appro-

THE QUIVER

privately done by girls. The admiring reporter says: "They looked pretty healthy and happy. They worked from seven in the morning until eight at night, with intervals for dinner and tea, and received fifteen shillings a week."

Two poets were also kept constantly on the premises. "The comic bard, a highly prosperous person," used to drive up to the door in a hansom cab. "The serious minstrel" had to walk, although "resplendent in raven ringlets with a cloak with a velvet collar." Sad to say, he was paid at a lower rate. A specimen of his style is as follows:

Ne'er doubt, fair maid, the vows I make;
A constant heart no time can shake.
Rather than cause it e'er to wander,
Time the true heart makes to grow fonder.

That twopence a line was the price of these verses may make some of us envious.

The funny fellow specialized in attacks on prevailing modes, and rejoiced to make the spoonbill bonnet "a source of innocent merriment."

Tell me, gentle lady fair,
Why such ugly things you wear.
Surely all your wits are fled
A spoon to carry on your head.

Minor bards of 1926 may sigh for the grand old days when this sort of thing supplied suppers of beefsteak and oyster sauce, and jolly jingling hansom.

The Pictorial Rash

What no one seems to know is just when "the windows of small stationers ceased to break out into a pictorial rash in the anticipation of the feast of St. Valentine." Mr. Dudley Ward in his memoirs quotes a later Valentine sent by a noble viscount who was either a dangerous rival of the hero of the raven ringlets or secretly did business with him.

I stand beneath thy lattice,
My dark-eyed Eugénie,
Though standing 'neath thy lattice
Thou wilt not think of me.

The modern lover can scarcely be imagined supplying his "old bean" with this sort of thing if "old bean" be still in love's language.

When Did It Die?

When and why the Valentine died is a puzzling question. The poets have "chirped and twittered twenty million loves" since distraught Ophelia sang the song that still

echoes sweetly in our ears. Kingsley, like the true naturalist he was, bases his Valentine on the tradition that birds pair punctually on the fourteenth of February. Christina Rossetti wrote a lovely sequence of Valentines to her mother in the 'eighties, a wide divergence, surely, from their original intention.

Some say that the Valentine was slain by the coarse vulgarity to which it sank degraded. If venom could have killed it, W. S. Gilbert might have been the assassin. For during the 'fifties he drew a caricature in *Fun* of his pet detestation, Napoleon III, wedding an Empress he tried—and failed—to make beautiful. It bore the tart inscription:

Beauty and the Beast I jine
In this agreeable Valentine.

Yet even Gilbert was powerless in the golden age of sentimentality.

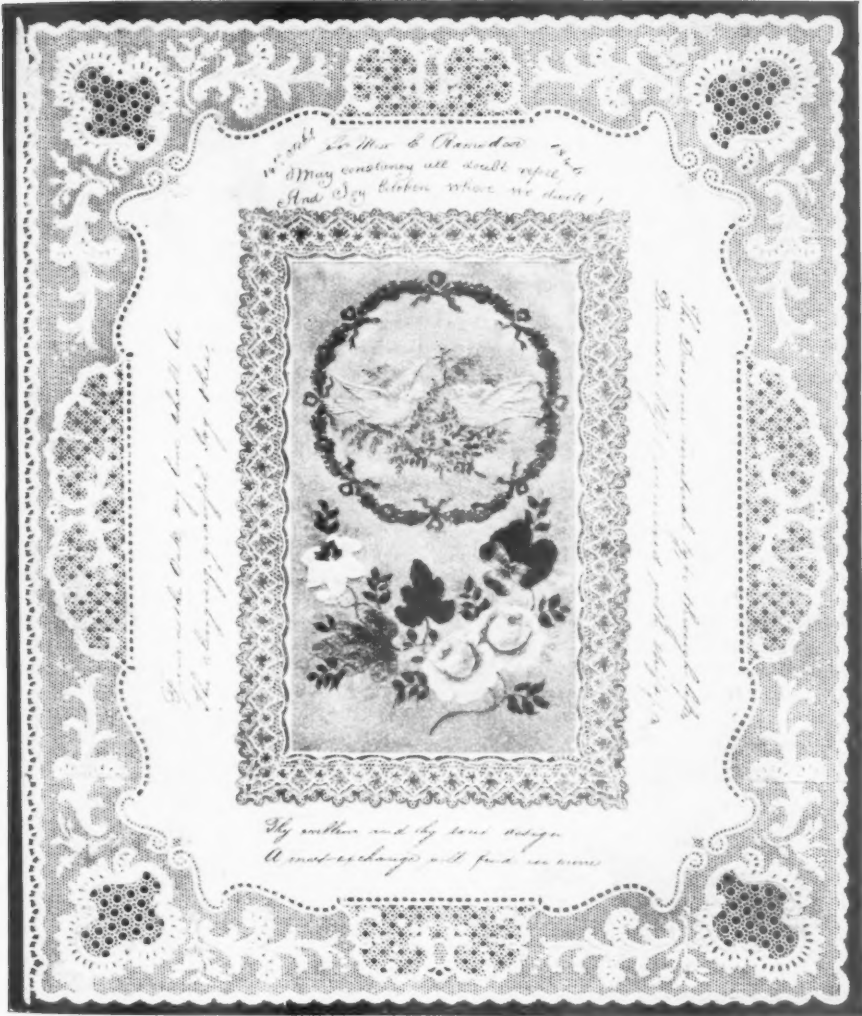
Pepys, Lamb and Dickens

By whom the Valentine has been rendered immortal in prose it is, however, easy to see. By a curious coincidence a trio of the most famous to concern themselves with the subject have February birthdays, and these three are Pepys, Lamb and Dickens. Sly Sammy Pepys was the ideal historian for the Valentine, for he kept his candid diary when all the smart folks drew lots for them "with much jesting." His pages buzz with reports of the costly jewels showered by King Charles and his courtiers upon Nell Gwynn and company. He chuckles when he himself draws a child for whom a cheap present will serve, and philosophizes when Fate awards him his wife. "I am also this year my wife's Valentine, which will cost me five pounds, but that I must have laid out in any case on the poor wretch had we not been Valentines." Mrs. Pepys fared better when she drew Sir William Batten, and we hear of her visit of thanks. "My wife to Sir W. Batten's, he having sent her half a dozen pair of gloves and a pair of silk stockings and garters."

"The Immortal Go-between"

If Pepys gives the Valentine its picturesque nook in history, Lamb has enshrined it in one of the best *Essays of Elia*. He pokes delicious fun at St. Valentine, calling him "the immortal go-between," with "singing Cupids for choristers," and the "mystical arrow borne before thee instead of crozier." He tells us how "the

THE VALENTINE IMMORTAL



A wonderful old Valentine of 1846

This is a remarkable specimen, treasured by the family of its owner. Each of the petals of the flowers lifts up, disclosing a motto or a shy word of praise.

weary and all forspent twopenny postman sinks under a load of delicate embarrassments not his own," adding: "It is scarcely credible to what extent this ephemeral courtship is carried on in this loving town." Next he waxes controversial over that popular emblem, the bleeding heart, asserting that there is no warranty for its use even in mythology. It would be just as logical, Lamb considers, for a lover to whisper tenderly: "Amanda, have you a

midriff to bestow?" After pages of airiest mockery he ends half seriously: "Visions of Love, of Cupids, of Hymen's eternal commonplaces *which having been will always be.*"

Two great novelists, one living and one dead, have made Valentines classical. A third—perhaps the greatest—needs only a "hard nib" and "a sheet of best gilt-edged" to achieve the best Valentine ever written.

Happy mortals who can still enjoy the

THE QUIVER

Waverleys may not be aware that the first edition of one of the most popular was entitled "St. Valentine's Day" or "The Fair Maid of Perth." Nearly the whole action of this spirited story is set on Valentine's Eve and Valentine's Day, and it shows how in pre-Reformation Scotland the religious observance was strictly underlined. The chivalrous armourer who won the hotly-contested fair maid was a skilled craftsman and offered her an exceeding pretty present. "It was a small ruby cut into the form of a heart and transfixed with a golden arrow, and was enclosed in a small purse made of links of the finest work of steel, as if it had been designed for a hauberk for a king. Round the verge of the purse were these words:

Love's darts
Cleave hearts
Through mail shirts.

Sir Walter Scott is invariably too accurate for his tale of "an age of velvet and bright steel" not to be regarded as a reliable authority.

Thomas Hardy's Tragic Valentine

Mr. Thomas Hardy in "Far From the Madding Crowd" uses a girlish prank and a scrap of scented paper as a means to tragic endings. The heroine, Bathsheba, buys a Valentine for a little boy, "a gorgeously illuminated and embossed design in post octavo." Her maid tempts her to send it as a joke to the morose Farmer Boldwood she mistakenly thinks impervious to her charms. His assumed indifference masking a sombre passion has stung her, though she will not admit it even to herself. In an evil hour she finds and uses an old seal with the audacious motto "Marry me" to secure the envelope of the fateful Valentine, leading to disaster upon disaster. By a sad irony another lover has the cruel task of identifying the writing Bathsheba has not even tried to disguise. Despite his devotion, a manly pity for the pain of Boldwood causes him to speak his mind. "It is unworthy of any thoughtful, brave and comely woman," he blurts out, and Mr. Hardy's conclusion of the whole matter is that "the rarest offerings of the purest love are but a self-indulgence and no generosity at all."

Chronologically the ever-green Valentine

of Sam Weller precedes that of mischievous Bathsheba. Dickens, indeed, twice immortalized the Valentine. For Bardell *v.* Pickwick, the most celebrated case ever tried in Fancy Street, came into court on the fourteenth of February. Even Sam's discovery of that "remarkable coincidence" evoked no smile from poor crestfallen Mr. Pickwick. "Valentine's Day, sir. Reg'lar good day for a breach o' promise."

Sam Weller's Humorous Composition

Bubbling over with the richest humour is the description of the arduous composition of Sam's own epistolary Valentine. How much we should have lost had the date slipped his memory instead of being recalled by a printseller's window with a picture of "a couple of human hearts skewered together and cooking before a cheerful fire, whilst a male and female cannibal in modern attire, the gentleman being clad in a blue coat and white trousers and the lady in a deep red pelisse with a parasol of the same, were approaching the meal with hungry eyes up a serpentine gravel walk leading thereto. A decidedly indelicate young gentleman in a pair of wings and nothing else was depicted as superintending the cooking." This was a Valentine at "the reduced rate of one shilling and sixpence."

Half inclining to his father's views that "Poetry's unnatural; no man ever talked poetry 'cept a beadle on a Boxing Day, or Warren's Blacking or Rowland's Oil, or one o' them low fellers," Sam, as all know, stuck to prose except for the signature: "Your love-sick Pickwick."

He went straight to the point:

"LOVELY CREETUR,—I feel myself ashamed and completely circumscribed in a-dressin' of you, for you *are* a nice gal and nothin' but it."

Sam's defence of his abrupt conclusion after he has invited the lady to "except of me as your Valentine" has passed into the language. "That's rayther a sudden pull up, isn't it, Sammy?" inquired Mr. Weller senior, sagest of critics on the hearth. "Not a bit of it," said Sam. "*She'll wish there was more of it, and that's the great art of letter writin'.*"

The last word is with the great philosopher, and it is final.



THE PROPER PLACE by O. DOUGLAS

SYNOPSIS OF OPENING CHAPTERS

IN one of Hans Andersen's tales he tells how at a dinner party one of the guests played on a flute made from a willow in the ditch, and behold everyone was immediately wafted to his or her proper place. "Everything in its proper place," sang the flute, and the bumptious host flew into the herdsman's cottage—you know the story. Nicole Rutherford thought of it as she looked at Mrs. Jackson, a rather stout, middle-aged lady, wife of a Glasgow man who was making money fast, and who thought that he ought to live in a big house in the country. Mrs. Jackson had come to inspect Rutherford House, which Lady Jane Rutherford found herself forced to dispose of now that Sir Walter Rutherford had been in his grave three months and the lean years had come. The Rutherford drawing room with its old-world atmosphere cast a spell upon the beholder, and it certainly seemed incongruous to imagine the plump Mrs. Jackson as mistress of the house. But times had changed, and in due course the Jacksons were installed in the big house in the country, whilst Lady Jane and her two daughters, Babs and Nicole, moved out.

They resolved they must go quite away from the scene of their former splendour, and after much search alighted on a curious little place called Harbour House in the town of Kirkmeikle in Fife. It was a tall, white-washed house, on the sea front. The front door was in the street; to the harbour it presented a long front punctuated with nine small-paned windows; the roof was high and pointed, and Barbara and Nicole when they visited it at once fell in love with the place. They arranged to keep on the middle-aged woman who was caretaking, and began to look forward keenly to their new life, despite its restrictions. Kirkmeikle, they soon found, had more attractions than appeared on the surface. Among the acquaintances Nicole made were Miss Janet Symington, a severe spinster who lived at Ravensraig, a staring new villa on the top of the green, and who was guardian to her small nephew, Alastair, and Mr. Beckett, a lodger in a neighbouring villa.

CHAPTER XVI

"Be this, good friends, our carol still—
'Be peace on earth, be peace on earth
To men of gentle will.'"

—W. M. THACKERAY.

THE Rutherfords had settled down in the Harbour House in a way that surprised themselves. It seemed almost unbelievable that a bare three months ago they had known nothing of Kirkmeikle and its inhabitants, and were now absorbed in the little town.

Nicole's desire to know only Kirkmeikle, and Barbara's determination to know as little of the town and as much as possible of the county, had resulted in a compromise. People from a distance were welcomed and their visits returned, and Barbara suffered Nicole's Kirkmeikle friends, if not gladly, at least with civility. The Bucklers she liked, and the Lamberts and Kilgours, but Mrs. Heggie and Miss Symington she could not abide; and marvelled at her cousin's liking for those two ladies.

"The appalling dullness of them, their utterly common outlook on life, their ugly voices and vacant faces, how you can be bothered with them, Nikky, passes me."

"But it's the way you look at them," Nicole protested. "You expect to find commonness, so of course you do. I find nothing but niceness in Mrs. Heggie. Just think what fun she is to feed. I met her the day after we had had her to luncheon, and she went over the whole *ménu* with reminiscent smacks. 'The grape fruit delicious; and that new way of doing eggs—and such tender beef I never tasted . . . and the puddings were a dream—I simply couldn't resist trying both, though I knew it was rather a liberty the first time I had lunched with you, and the whole thing so *recherché*.' Isn't it worth while to have someone like that to a meal? I think it is. As for Joan Heggie, she is rather ugly and awkward, but she can write poetry which is quite beautiful. Miss Symington interests me. . . ."

"You like them," said Barbara, "because they make a little worshipping court for you; you shine against their dullness."

But Nicole only laughed and called heaven to witness that she had a very rude cousin.

As for Lady Jane, she was gently civil to everyone who came, but preferred Mrs.

THE QUIVER

Brodie and her noisy brood, and old Betsy with her talk of Tweedside, to any of them.

December is a month that, for most people, "gallops withal," and it seemed to be Christmas before anyone was prepared for it at the Harbour House.

It was the morning of Christmas Eve, a clear frosty morning, and the drawing-room did not present its usual orderly appearance. White paper, gay ribbons, boxes of sweets and candied fruits, crackers for the outgoing parcels lay about on the big sofa, while the long table at the far end of the room was piled with parcels which had arrived by post. Nicole gazed round her ruefully, remarking that everything must be packed before luncheon, whereupon Barbara came briskly to the rescue.

"Say what's to go into each parcel," she said, "and I'll tie them up. These are the local ones, I suppose?"

"Thank goodness, yes. All the others were packed days ago. I wish I hadn't gone to Edinburgh yesterday and I wouldn't have been in such a state of chaos. Are you sure you can spare the time? Well, first a parcel for Mrs. Brodie from mother: just odds and ends to make a brightness for the children. Is there a box to put them in? These gaudy crackers, sweets, dates, short-bread and sugar biscuits: a tin of tea for Mrs. Brodie and these toys for their stockings—will they all go in? Good. That's the only really bulky parcel. You do tie up so neatly, Babs. Providence obviously intended you for a grocer."

"What about this?" Barbara asked, holding up a large flat box.

"That only wants a ribbon round it and a bit of holly stuck in. It's for old Betsy: shortbread. I had it made with 'Frae Tweedside' done in pink sugar—a small attention which I hope she'll appreciate. Mother is sending her tea and other things. The framed print is for the Bucklers, they haven't many household gods; the Bond Street chocolates are for Mrs. Heggie, she has such a sweet tooth; the book of Scots ballads for Dr. Kilgour."

"I can't see that Mrs. Heggie needs anything," Barbara said as she wrapped each thing in white paper and tied it with a red ribbon. "It will only make her insist on us all going to dinner at her house. . . ." She looked round at the articles remaining and asked, taking up a Venetian glass bowl with a lid, "Who is this pretty thing for?"

"It is pretty, isn't it? I'm going to fill

it with my own special geranium bath salts, put it in a white box, tie it with a length of carnation ribbon and present it to Miss Janet Symington." As she spoke Nicole looked impishly at her cousin, who said: "Ridiculous! What will she do with such a dainty present?"

"Nothing, probably; but I'm determined she will have at least one pretty thing in her possession. Pack it, Barbara, very gently with cotton-wool and lots of soft paper. . . . These are the things for Alastair's stocking. He's coming here after breakfast to-morrow to get the big toy Mums has for him. The Lamberts are having him for early dinner and tea, so he'll have quite a cheerful day."

"You spoil everyone," said Barbara.

"I like spoiling people, but I quite see I'm a horrible trial to you—you would have liked this house to keep up its reputation for exclusiveness, wouldn't you, poor pet? . . . But we're not really over-run by my new friends. They never come unless they're asked, and we have quiet, jolly times, old Babs, you and Mother and I. I sometimes think it is almost unbelievable that we can be so happy after—everything."

Barbara touched her cousin's hand. "I know—I didn't approve much of coming here, as you know, but I'm bound to say I think Aunt Jane has been the better for it. She takes more interest in people and things than she did. I was really afraid about her before we left Rutherford, but now she is less of a gentle spirit and more of a living, breathing mortal. It pleases her to have Alastair so much with her, and she likes Mr. Beckett. D'you notice how she looks at them sometimes—the little boy and the grown man? I think it hurts her to see them, and yet the pleasure exceeds the pain. When Alastair plays round, preoccupied and busy, talking to himself, she sees again Ronnie and Archie, for all little boys are very much alike; and in Mr. Beckett she sees them as they would have been now."

Nicole nodded. "I'm rather dreading to-morrow for her. One can go on from day to day, but these special times are difficult. . . . What do outsiders matter after all, Babs? It's we three against the world—though you and I do bark at each other *whiles*!"

After luncheon and a belated post had been discussed, Lady Jane and her niece settled down to cope with the last of the

THE PROPER PLACE

preparations while Nicole set out to deliver parcels. It was about three o'clock before she started. The frost of the morning had increased in intensity, so that walking was difficult on the cobbled stones, and Betsy's outside stair, which had been recklessly washed, was now coated with ice.

Betsy herself was sitting wrapped in a shawl by the fire. "Come in," she cried. "I kent yer step. Bring forrit a chair and get a warm. It's surely terr'ble cauld."

"It's a perfect Christmas Eve," Nicole told her, walking over to look out of the little window. "I can see the moon already, though the sun's only going down now, and the red tiles have got snow on them, just a sprinkle. I do like your view of chimney-pots and roofs. It makes me think of storks and Northern Lights and Christmas trees in every window."

This harmless remark seemed to provoke the old woman.

"Gentry," she said peevishly, "are aye crackin' about *views*. I never felt the need o' a view if I had a guid fire. An' I dinna haud wi' Christmas. It's juist Papacy. It fair scanners me to hear the wives aboot the doors a-crackin' aboot Christmas here an' Christmas there. Ye canna blame the bairns for bein' taen up wi' Sandy Claws an' hingin' up their stockin's, but it's no for grown folk. . . . Whae tell't ye that Christ was born on the twenty-fifth o' December? It's no in the Bible that I've ever seen. Juist will-worship, that's what me auld minister ca'ed it, an' he kent. The verra word's Popish—Christ-mass."

Nicole left the window and sat down by Betsy.

"Does it matter about all that?" she asked. "Isn't it a good thing that we should keep one day for kind thoughts and goodwill to all men because long ago in Bethlehem a baby was born?"

Betsy sniffed. "Ay, but I dinna haud wi' 't. It was aye the New Year we keepit at Langhope. Thae were the days."

"Did you have presents?"

"Na, we hed nae money for presents, but the bairns dressed up and went frae hoose to hoose playin' at *Galatians* and singin' :

'Get up, auld wife, an' shake yer feathers,
Dinna think that we are beggars;
We are but children come to play--
Get up and gie's oor Hogmanay.'

an' we got oatcakes and cheese and a lump o' currant loaf and shortbread, and we carried it a' hame in our pinnies—"

Nicole was sorting out parcels from her big bag.

"I don't suppose," she said, "that this shortbread will taste anything like as good, but it says on it 'Frae Tweedside.'"

"So it does." Betsy gazed admiringly at the sugar inscription. "It's faur ower bonny to eat; I'll juist pit it in a drawer."

Nicole exclaimed at the idea and produced tea and a warm woolly coat.

"Those are from my mother with her best wishes. She hopes to come to see you very soon."

Betsy said, with her hands on her gifts: "I dinna ken what to say. I'm no used bein' noticed. Naebody ever brocht me things afore, no as muckle as a mask o' tea. Lady Jane's kindness is fair nonsense, but ye'll tell her I'm muckle obleeged."

"Mrs. Martin told me to tell you that she'll be along this evening with some 'kail.'"

"Ay, weel, it's na a'boddy's kail I'd sup. God gies the guid food but the deil sends the cook. . . . But Agnes Martin's a rale guid haund at kail."

"Well, good-bye, Betsy, and—a merry Christmas!"

"Na, I'm for nane o' yer Christmases. I'll gie you a wish for Ne'er day for fear I dinna see ye. The awfulest luck ever ye kent, and a man afore the year's oot."

Nicole left her chuckling and took her perilous way down the slippery stairs to the house of Mrs. Brodie.

Mrs. Brodie was busy cleaning for the New Year and, like Betsy, seemed to take little stock in Christmas.

"Ay," she said, leaning on her besom as Nicole produced her box; "the morn's Christmas, but it makes nae odds here. It's juist wark, wark the same. The bairns get an orange an' a screw of sweets in their stockin's, but that's a' the length we gang. It's rale guid o' yer mither to send thae things—Jimmie, I'll warm yer lugs if ye dinna let that alane! Is she gaun tae gie me a look-in wan o' thae days? I like fine to hae a crack wi' her. Weel, guid day to ye an' thanks."

Nicole left her parcels at Lucknow and at Knebworth and then turned into the gate of Ravenscraig.

Miss Symington was, as usual, sitting in the dining-room making up the accounts of one of the many societies she was interested in. There was no sign of festivity anywhere, not so much as a sprig of holly. To-night Alastair would hang up his stock-

THE QUIVER

ing and she would go in on her way to bed and put some things in it; she had them lying ready—a shilling and some walnuts in the toe, a pair of warm gloves, an orange, and a small packet of chocolates—"Chatterbox" would be laid on the breakfast table, also a game sent by Mrs. Heggie, and a box of Meccano from the Bucklers. It was too much for one child, she thought, and she meant to tell him how many children had nothing but a crust of bread.

She added up columns rapidly as she sat, putting very neat figures into a pass-book. Then she put the books away and fetched some brown paper and string from a table in the corner.

Nicole came springing in on her like a gay schoolgirl.

"Am I disturbing you? No, please go on packing. I've been at it for the last week, and to-day I'd never have got through if Barbara hadn't given me a hand. She takes time by the fetlock, as my brother Ronnie used to say, and is always well beforehand."

"These are just a few things that Annie will take out this evening," Miss Symington said, cutting the end of a string carefully. Nicole, watching her, said: "You don't keep Christmas much in Kirkmeikle, do you? My efforts to be seasonable have been rather snubbed this afternoon; but Alastair keeps it, I'm sure. Will you put those things into his stocking, please? They are only little things, but they may amuse him. And this is for you. You won't open it till to-morrow morning—promise? Now, I'm not going to stay a moment longer. A very happy Christmas to you. No; don't come to the door. . . ."

She heaved a sigh of relief as she left the dreary villa and stood on the brae-face looking over the tumbled roofs to the sea, and saw the lights along the coast begin to twinkle greeting to the stars in the frosty sky.

"Quite like a Christmas number, isn't it?" a voice said behind her, and she turned quickly to find Simon Beckett.

"Where are you wandering to, sir? I've been playing Sandy Claws, as old Betsy puts it. . . . I thought you would have gone away to spend the festive season—falsely so called."

Simon turned and walked by her side. "Watch how you go; it's pretty slippery. . . . I'm not going away. I've only cousins to go to, anyway, and they don't par-

ticularly want me. Besides, it hardly seemed worth while to go so far just now. I'm keen on getting my job done and . . ."

"How are you getting on? You haven't asked for any advice yet?"

"No—you see, I've only now got the rough draft done. I've taken an age to it. It's when I re-write and polish that I'll be most grateful for help—only, I hardly like to bother you."

"We'd be enormously flattered and not in the least bothered, you know that . . . I've been at Ravenscraig with some things for Alastair's stocking. It was all so hopelessly uncheery for the poor lamb. When I think of our childhood—the fuss that was made, the thrill of the preparations, the mystery— It does make a difference having a mother. An aunt given to good works isn't the same at all."

Simon agreed. "I've got a train for him," he said, "with rails. It only came this morning and I was in a perfect funk that it wasn't going to turn up in time. He's been fearfully keen to possess one. I hope it'll come up to his expectations."

"Sure to—trains never fail one. What are you doing to-morrow?"

"Nothing special. I thought I'd treat myself to a really long walk."

"We're quite alone," Nicole told him. "After your walk it would be a kind act if you'd eat your Christmas dinner with us—seven-thirty. Afterwards we'll sit round the fire and talk—tell old tales and laugh. . . . Isn't it jolly to-night? The moon and the snowy roofs and the lights in the frosty air. And look at that little steamer plugging along! Where are you going to, you funny little boat? Don't you know what night this is?"

CHAPTER XVII

"Go humbly; humble are the skies.

And low and large and fierce the Star;

So very near the manger lies

That we may travel far."

G. K. CHESTERTON.

WHEN Alastair had almost finished dressing on Christmas morning, Gentle Annie suddenly dumped a parcel on the dressing-table, announcing "That's ma present."

Alastair looked shyly at it, making no effort to discover its contents.

"Open't. Here, see—" Annie quickly whipped off the paper and disclosed, on a stand, a round glass globe, containing a

THE PROPER PLACE

miniature cottage, which, when shaken, became filled with whirling snow-flakes.

"It's a snow-storm," she declared triumphantly. "It cost one shilling and sixpence."

"Oh, Annie, how could you afford it?" Alastair asked anxiously.

"Aw weel, I wanted a strong ane this time. The last I got was a shilling, an' I brocht it back from Langtoun in aside ma new hat, for I thoct that would be a safe place; but when I won hame I fand it had broken, and a' the water and white stuff—I think it's juist bakin' soda—was owre ma hat."

Alastair shook the globe and produced a most realistic snow-scene.

"Is the snow really only baking soda?" he asked rather sadly.

"Ay, but it does fine. We'll pit it on the mentelpiece for an ornament, an' juist shake it whiles, an' then it'll no get broken in a hurry. . . . By! but yere weel aff gettin' a' thae things in yer stockin'. . . . Dinna brush yer hair till yer jersey's on. D'ye no see ye pit it a' wrang again?—Noo, rin awa doon to yer breakfast like a guid laddie and be sure to say 'A Merry Christmas' to yer auntie."

But Alastair, very pink in the face, was thrusting something into Annie's hand.

"It's my present—a purse. I bought it at Jinnie Nisbet's when I was out with Mr. Beckett. D-d'you like it?"

"By! It's a braw ane," said Annie. She saw that it was really a tobacco-pouch, but Alastair had bought it for a purse, and she wouldn't enlighten him. "I'll keep ma chance-money in't and aye carry it when I'm dressed."

Alastair, blushing with pleasure to hear that his present was valued, and carrying the contents of his stocking, ran downstairs. He was well content with the beginning of his day and ready to enjoy anything that might turn up.

"Good morning, Aunt Janet," he said, "a Merry Christmas," his eyes all the time fixed on his place at the breakfast table. *There were parcels there!*

"Good morning, Alastair—a happy Christmas! I hope you're a grateful boy to-day. Just think of all the poor children who will get no presents. No; sup your porridge and eat your bread and butter before you touch a parcel."

Miss Symington had never much to say to her nephew except in the way of reproof, and breakfast was eaten more or less in

silence. When they had finished, the bell was rung for prayers, and the servants came in and sat on chairs near the door while their mistress read a chapter and a prayer, and Alastair said the text which Annie had to teach him every morning. At first she had opened the Bible and chosen a verse at random, and Alastair had come down and repeated, 'All the Levites in the Holy City were two hundred, fourscore and four,' or something equally relevant, until Miss Symington gave her a text-book which she was working steadily through.

"Your text, Alastair," his aunt said on this Christmas morning, and Alastair's flute-like voice repeated gravely, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days not . . . when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them."

To Alastair there was no sense in the words, but he liked the sound of them, the rhythm . . . "Remember now thy Creator" . . . "May I open my parcels now?"

Miss Symington had not much to open. The postman would bring her some cards and booklets doubtless. Mrs. Lambert had sent her a tray-cloth, her own work, and Mrs. Heggie—with a thought, perhaps, of Alastair—a box of candied fruit. And there was Miss Rutherford's box. It stood on the sideboard, a seductive-looking parcel wrapped in white paper and tied with carnation silk ribbon. What could it be? Surely not chocolates. . . . Slowly she untied the ribbon, undid the paper, took the lid off the box and lifted out the fragile gilt bowl. She sniffed. Bath salts—geranium. That was the scent Miss Rutherford always used. Well, really! Miss Symington sat back in her chair and looked at the frivolous, pretty thing. No one had ever thought before of giving her such a present. A thought came vaguely to her that the gift was like the giver, the glow of it, the brightness, the fragrance. While Alastair played, absorbed, she gathered up the box with the bowl and the ribbon and carried them up to her room.

The window was wide open to the frosty air, the bed stripped and airing. She looked round for a place to put her present. The dressing table was covered with the silver brushes and mirror her parents had given her on her twenty-first birthday. There was a large pin-cushion too, and two silver-topped bottles that would not un-

THE QUIVER

screw. It looked crowded, and she remembered Nicole's dressing table when she had once been taken into her room to see something, a table old and beautiful in itself, covered with plate-glass, with nothing on it but a standing mirror and a bowl of flowers. Everything else, Nicole had explained, lived in the drawers of the table: it was tidier so, she thought.

Janet then tried the bowl on the mantelpiece, but decided at once that it couldn't stand there. It was an ugly painted wood mantelpiece, with a china ornament at each end and a photograph of the Scott monument in the middle, and the Venetian bowl looked forlornly out of its element, as a nymph might have looked at an Educational Board meeting.

There was a fine old walnut chest of drawers opposite the window. It had a yellowish embroidered cover on it which Janet whisked off, leaving it bare. That was better. The wood was beautiful, and the bowl stood proudly regarding its own reflection in the polished depths.

Janet was surprised at her own feeling of pleasure and satisfaction in her new possession. After all there was, she thought, something rather nice about having pretty things about one. But the worst of it was that one pretty thing was apt to make everything else look uglier. That wallpaper! It had been chosen for its lasting qualities, but she acknowledged to herself that it was far from beautiful. Suppose the walls were made cream? It would make a difference. Perhaps when spring-cleaning time came round she might have it done, though it did seem ridiculous to fuss about one's own room. A guest room was a different matter. . . . She lifted the lid of the bowl and the light sweet scent stole out. What had Alastair said? "Soft and warm and nice smelling." She supposed many people considered it worth while to do everything in their power to make themselves and their surroundings attractive, but in this fleeting world was it not a waste of time? So soon we would all be done with it. "A few more years shall roll—" She wondered if Nicole and her mother, among their pretty things, ever thought of another world and of the importance of working while it was day. The shadow of the night that was coming had always lain dark across Janet's day of life.

The sound of voices disturbed her train of thought. Looking out of the window she saw her neighbour, Mr. Beckett, standing

on the gravel holding a large box, while his dog, James, leapt on him, and Alastair ran about giving excited yelps. Janet felt almost ashamed of herself for noticing how good the young man was to look at, standing there in his light tweed jacket and knickerbockers. He was bare-headed, and the winter sun turned his fair hair to gold.

"Ask your aunt if you may come in with me next door. My room's the best place to fix it up in," she heard him say, and went quickly downstairs to the front door.

"It's a train," Alastair shouted, roused completely out of his habitual gravity, "a train for me! May I go with Mr. Beckett and see how it works?"

Janet met the eyes of the tall young man, who smiled boyishly, as if he were as keen on the game as his small companion, and she found herself telling him, with quite a warm inflexion in her usually so colourless voice, how good he was to trouble about her nephew, and she hoped Alastair was as grateful as he ought to be.

Alastair, in no mood to study inflexions in his aunt's voice, tugged at his friend's arm, saying: "Come on, then—Oh, *do* come on." But Simon felt compelled to suggest that perhaps Miss Symington would accompany them to see the train work.

Alastair's face was anxious until he heard his aunt decline graciously the invitation. She added that Annie would call for him at eleven o'clock to take him to the Harbour House, and about twelve he was going to the Lamberts'.

"My word, Bat, you're having a day," Simon told him.

"I'm afraid he will be spoiled among so many kind people," Janet said primly.

"Come on, oh, *do* come on," Alastair insisted, jiggling up and down impatiently, feeling that all this talk was quite beside the mark. So Simon, with a smile to Miss Symington, allowed himself to be led away.



Evening had fallen on another Christmas Day. Everywhere tired children were being put to bed, some cross, some dissatisfied, all more or less suffering from over-eating. It is doubtful whether the long-looked-for day ever does come up to expectations, but no matter how disillusioned they go to bed, in the morning they are already beginning again to look forward to that shining day which lies at the end of the long year ahead.

The Rutherfords, having long since put

THE PROPER PLACE

away childish things, and having no expectations of extra happiness, but rather the reverse, had been surprised to find themselves thoroughly enjoying their first Christmas in Kirkmeikle. Alastair and the postman had taken up the morning; after luncheon they had, all three, walked round the links and finished up at the Lamberts' garden-enclosed house, which was full of all happy, cheerful things, toys and children's voices, music and firelight. Mr. Lambert had told a wonderful story of pirates in Kirkmeikle with Alastair as hero, and they had played games and sung carols.

Now dinner was over, and they were sitting round the fire in the long drawing-room drinking their coffee, Lady Jane in her own low chair, Nicole beside her on a wooden stool with a red damask cushion, Barbara on the sofa, and Simon Beckett comfortable in a capacious arm-chair.

Barbara wore a dress the colour of Parma violets, Nicole was in white with a spray of scarlet berries tucked into the white fur which trimmed it.

They had been talking animatedly,

but now a silence had fallen. So quiet was the room that outside the tide could be heard rippling over the sands. A boy passed whistling some popular song, a gay tune with an undertone of sadness.

After a minute, "Well," said Lady Jane, "what are we going to do to amuse our guest."

"Let's play at something," Nicole suggested.

"But what?" asked Barbara.

"Oh, anything," Nicole said lazily. "Suppose we each tell what strikes us as the funniest thing we know."

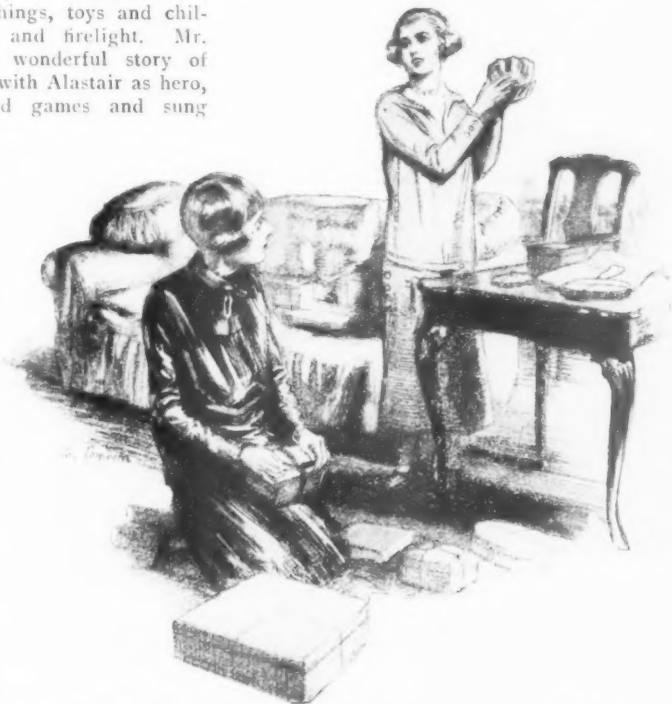
"The best joke, do you mean?" Simon asked.

"The best joke, or story, or episode in a

play, or something that happened to yourself. The thing that has remained in your memory as being really funny."

"Far too difficult," Barbara declared. "I laugh and forget."

"And I," said her aunt, "have such a primitive sense of humour that it's the most obvious joke that makes me laugh: to see



"'Who is this pretty thing for?' asked Barbara, taking up a Venetian glass bowl"—p. 364

*Drawn by
John Cameron*

somebody fall over a pail of water convulses me. But I never can remember good stories, can you, Mr. Beckett?"

"I seldom remember them at the right moment," Simon confessed.

"I'm glad of that," Barbara said, getting out her work. "I do think those people are a bore who are constantly saying, 'That reminds me of a story—'"

"I think you're all very stupid," Nicole said.

"But I do remember one thing, Miss Nicole," Simon said, "one of A. A. M.'s *Punch* articles on how to dispose of safety-razor blades. The man had been in the habit of dropping worn-out blades on the floor, and his wife protested that the house-

THE QUIVER

maid cut her finger and dropped blood on the blue carpet. 'Then,' said the husband, 'we'll either have to get a red carpet or a blue-blooded housemaid.' I always think of that when it comes to discarding a razor-blade and laugh. What is your funniest thing?"

"I was trying to think," Nicole said, hugging her knees, "but everything has gone out of my mind. There's one story that always cheers me, about Braxfield, the hanging judge; I think it was Braxfield, but it doesn't matter anyway. He was crossing a burn in spate, and by some mischance his wig fell off. His servant fished it out and handed it to him, but the judge refused it, petulantly remarking that it wasn't his. 'A weel,' said his servant, '*there's nae wale o' wigs in this burn.*' Don't you think that's a good story?"

"Very," said Simon, collecting the coffee cups and putting them on a table. "But what does 'wale' mean?"

Nicole dropped her head in her hands. "To think that I've been trying to tell a Scots story to a Sassenach! 'Wale' means 'choice'—it's the cold sense of the answer that makes the story seem so good to me. I thought you looked a little blank. Like the Englishmen dining at some inn and waited on by a new recruit of a waiter. They were waiting for the sweets, when he rushed in and said, '*The pudden's scail't. It was curds and it played jap over the dish and syne skited doon the stairs.*' The poor dears realized that they were to get no pudding, but they never fathomed why."

"I don't suppose," Lady Jane said to her guest, "that you understood a word of that. I know it was Greek to me when I came first to Scotland. . . . I wish you'd tell me about your writing. How exactly do you proceed?"

"Oh, well," Simon said, lighting a cigarette, "my job would be the merest child's play to some people. I haven't to invent anything, only to put down facts. . . . I thought it would be the easiest thing to write a simple account, but I'm beginning to think that simplicity is the most difficult thing you can try for. You'd laugh at the struggle I have sometimes."

"But," said Nicole, "it must be great fun when things do go right. Don't tell me you haven't successful moments when you say to yourself, 'Well, that's jolly good anyway.'"

Simon shook his head. "Those moments hardly ever occur. Now and again, when

I get past a nasty snag, I seize my hat and walk five miles over the head of it! No wonder my work doesn't make rapid progress."

"How long does it take to write a book," Barbara asked. "I mean, of course, an ordinary-sized book, not a 'Decline and Fall.'"

Simon laughed. "I daresay an expert could do it in a few weeks; but it's taken me months to write the first rough draft—doing nothing else, either, except golf and motor a bit and walk a good deal. But what I'm thankful for every day of my life is that my lecturing is over. However I stood up and jabbered to all those people I don't know."

"It is dreadful," said Lady Jane. "Mine have only been small things like opening bazaars and flower shows, but I made myself quite ill dreading the day. But when once I was on my feet and realized that my audience was not made up of ravening wolves waiting to devour me, but of friendly people who wished me well, then I was quite all right."

"Women are less self-conscious than men," Simon said. "I felt such a fool."

"I wish I'd been there to see you," Nicole told him unfeelingly. "But, you know, you should always make a point of doing things you simply hate doing: it's such a lovely feeling afterwards. Besides, it's nice to look back on efforts made; long, uneventful days are jolly at the time, but it's the efforts that really count, as you know much better than I do. What a nice old age you'll have!"

"I like that from you, Nikky," her cousin said. "What kind of old age you'll have I don't know, for at present you live like an old lady, visiting in the day and in the evening reading dull books by the fire. . . . Well, aren't we going to do anything?"

"Won't you sing, please?" Simon suggested.

"Oh, do, Babs. Sing what you sang this afternoon—'On Christmas night when it was cold.' D'you know it, Mr. Beckett? Such an old carol."

Barbara went to the piano and struck a few chords softly. Lady Jane, as if drawn by the music, moved close to her.

"For his love that bought us all dear
Listen, lordings, that be here,
And I will tell you in fere

Whereof came the flower delice
On Christmas night when it was cold
Our Lady lay among beasts bold. . . ."

THE PROPER PLACE

Barbara sang the words as if she loved them.

Nicole, in her white frock and her scarlet berries, sat looking into the fire. Her lips were parted and her eyes bright as if she were seeing pictures in the flames, lovely pictures.

Simon sat forward, with his hands clasped between his knees, watching Nicole's face as she dreamed.

"Whereof came the flower delice," sang Barbara.

CHAPTER XVIII

"Two lads that thought there was no more behind,
But such a day to-morrow as to-day,
And to be boy eternal."

—*The Winter's Tale.*

TWO days after Christmas, breakfast at the Harbour House was a somewhat prolonged meal, for the post arriving in the middle brought a letter which needed immediate discussion.

"Mums," said Nicole, "here's a letter from Bice saying that Jane and Barnabas have taken scarlet fever. Happily, Arthur has been in the country with Aunt Constance, as he isn't in quarantine, but Aunt Constance has to start almost at once for Cannes, and he can't go home of course, so this is an SOS from Bice asking if she may send him here for the rest of his holidays. She is very worried, poor dear—see what she says."

"What a sad thing to happen in the holidays," Lady Jane lamented, taking the letter, while Barbara, coming back from the sideboard with her tea-cup, stood staring gloomily out of the window. Nicole, who was watching her cousin's face, said: "Quite so, Babs. We're for it, I fear. We'll have to take the child for at least a fortnight and cart him back to school at the end of it. Personally, I don't mind; boys are always a delight to me, only I don't quite see what the poor little chap will do in Kirkmeikle."

"How old is he?" Barbara asked moodily. "Twelve, isn't he? If we had been at Rutherford it wouldn't have mattered. He'd have gone out with the keepers and there would always have been something to amuse him; but a boy cooped up here—"

"At an age, too, when women are a bore and a nuisance."

"And," said Barbara, "we haven't seen

him for ages. He's probably one of those frightfully superior schoolboys who despise more or less everything. I met one at Langlands once and I never felt so shy in my life. I hardly dared address him, and he only just condescended to answer me."

"Ah! Not Bice's boy—he wouldn't be like that. Bice herself is such a simple creature. Well, Mums, what do you think?"

Lady Jane laid down the letter and began to butter a bit of toast. "Of course he must come here, poor boy; but I am so sorry for Bice missing his holidays. When I last heard from her she was planning all sorts of treats for Arthur's Christmas holidays, and Barnabas, who adores his big brother, was going back with him to school. Now I suppose he will be weeks late and spoil his first term. . . . We must wire at once. If they put him in charge of the guard of the night train we can meet him in Edinburgh to-morrow morning. Which of you will go?"

"I'd better," Nicole said as her cousin remained silent. "Barbara might greet him as Miss Murdstone greeted David Copperfield: 'Generally speaking, I don't like boys. How do you do, boy?' What shall we do with him, I wonder?"

"Arthur will be quite happy," Lady Jane said serenely.

"Doubtless; but how do you propose to entertain him?"

"Why, he'll amuse himself, Nikky. The harbour and the rocks and golf . . ."

"Well—I hope so, Mums, but I foresee a strenuous time for us all. You see, he's pretty old—twelve; almost ready for Eton, and he may have large ideas. Besides, remember, he's coming here, you say, disappointed of all manner of treats in the way of plays and pantomimes and parties. However—"

The next night Arthur Dennis was settled in the Harbour House and as much at home as if he had been born and bred there. Nicole and he had arrived with the four-thirty train, having spent most of the day at the Castle and the Zoo, and after tea Arthur sat answering gravely all the questions put to him, but otherwise contributing nothing to the conversation. When Lady Jane suggested that he might like to unpack, he rose with alacrity and went out leaving the door open.

"Well?" said Nicole, looking from her mother to her cousin.

"A dear boy," said Lady Jane.

THE QUIVER

"He has Bice's beautiful eyes," Barbara said, "and what lashes to waste on a boy!"

Nicole poked the fire. "I like his grave way of speaking," she said, "and that sweet, infrequent smile. He nearly went out of the carriage window trying to find out how the Forth Bridge is made. I've promised to take him to see it close at hand. He isn't superior, Babs, and he tells me he's 'frightfully bucked' to be here. Coming up alone in a sleeper had been a great thrill. I think you were right, Mums; he'll be quite happy. Though speechless at present he talked a lot on the way. He tells me his chief horror is what he calls 'civilization,' meaning, I find, *chars-à-bancs* that popularize remote places! He says, personally, he can't get far enough away from people and shops. His idea of bliss is Loch Bervie—forty miles of rough road between you and a railway station. They spent the summer there last year, you remember, and he got a taste for solitude. Dear me, to judge from the noise, our whole staff is helping him to unpack!"

The next morning Nicole set out with the guest to climb among the rocks and watch the sea-birds, for Arthur, it turned out, was deeply interested in birds.

On their way home they met Simon Beckett striding along as if celebrating some victory over words. They stopped to talk and Arthur was introduced. "Arthur Dennis. Driven from home in the holidays by scarlet fever."

"Rough luck!" said Simon. "What school are you at? No? That's my old prep. Is Snooks still there? By Jove!"

Nicole stood watching the two eager speakers, well pleased to be forgotten, realizing that here was a solution of the entertainment problem. If only Mr. Beckett in his spare time would take some notice of Arthur, what a help it would be!

They strolled home together, and Simon was easily persuaded to join them at luncheon. Nicole managed to whisper to Arthur that this was the Everest Beckett, and his eyes were large in adoration. Later, when Simon invited him to go to the golf course with him and have tea at his rooms, he went almost dazed with happiness.

"And, Arthur," Nicole said to him as Simon Beckett was taking leave of his hostess, "if there is another boy at tea, Alastair Symington, be kind to him, won't you? I know how good you are to Barnabas, and this poor little chap has no father or mother. Of course, he's much too

young for you, only about six, but Mr. Beckett makes quite a companion of him."

Thus followed for Arthur a fortnight of complete bliss. There are worse fates than to be an only boy in a household of women, each of them at his beck and call. Mrs. Martin cooked only what she knew he liked, and Christina cared not how muddy his boots were or how many snowy towels he wiped half-washed hands on. Beenie tidied up after him without a word. A smile of approval from the young sultan was all they asked. Nicole was his very good friend, ready always for fun. Barbara patiently stitched sails for the boats he made. "Cousin Jane" was the one he liked best to sit with him after he was in bed and tell him stories of Rutherford and Ronnie and Archie.

Almost at once Arthur developed a strong affection for young Alastair—"The Sprat," he called him—and was never so happy as when he had him trotting at his heels. At the same time he was a frank and fearless commentator and did not hide his disapproval of certain traits in the Sprat's character.

One day Simon Beckett suggested that he would take the two boys to St. Andrew's and show them the places of interest and give them luncheon at an hotel, and asked Barbara and Nicole to be of the party. Barbara happened to be engaged, but Nicole was delighted to accept the invitation.

Simon had meant to go by car, but the boys were both keen on a train journey, so they set off, crowding into a carriage that already contained an elderly stout man and his equally stout wife. Nicole and Simon sat facing each other in the middle, and the boys were given the corner seats.

As there were strangers present Arthur never uttered word, but looked out at the dreary winter fields with an impassive face. Alastair, alas! seemed unaware of how the best people behave when travelling. First he removed his hat, then he drew from his pocket a mouth-organ and, sitting hunched up in his seat, began to play on it earnestly.

Arthur stood it for a minute or two, then he leant forward and said, "Stop that, can't you?" But Alastair, like the deaf adder, stopped his cats and went on playing, his usually pale face quite pink with the exertion, his hair standing up in what Gentle Annie called a "cow's lick."

"Pan in an overcoat!" whispered Nicole to Simon. "Did you ever see such a freakish little face?"



"Again Arthur leant forward and admonished his friend—'Don't behave like a beastly tripper'"

Drawn by
John Cameron

THE QUIVER

Again Arthur leant forward and admonished his friend—

"Don't behave like a beastly tripper."

Alastair stopped playing, but still holding the mouth-organ to his mouth with both hands, said simply, "I am a tripper," and started again. With a snort of wrath Arthur turned away and devoted his whole attention to the landscape.

Later, at luncheon in the large and splendid hotel, he resumed the subject. "Sprat, why d'you like playing a mouth-organ when you're among people you don't know?" he asked when they were both attacking plates of roast beef, Alastair very carefully, for he had only lately been promoted from a fork and spoon to a knife and fork. "Why do you?"

Alastair held his knife and fork upright, which he had been told not to do, as he considered the question.

"Because it makes me happy," he said at last.

"But—don't you mind people seeing you play the fool?"

Alastair shook his head.

"Then," said Arthur, "I believe you're Labour."

"Yes," said Alastair.

"What is Labour, Sprat?" Nicole asked him.

"It's what Annie is. There was an election in Kirkmeikle once, and I wore a red ribbon to show I was Labour."

"And I suppose," Arthur said bitterly, "that you like chars-à-bancs full of trippers throwing papers and empty ginger-beer bottles about?"

Alastair lifted his head, his eyes the eyes of one beholding a vision. "How lovely!" he said.

Nicole and Simon laughed, and Nicole said: "Never mind, Sprat! I like chars-à-bancs and trippers and ginger-beer bottles, too."

"I bet Mr. Beckett doesn't," Arthur declared.

Alastair looked wistfully at his friend, who said, "Have some ginger beer now, both of you," and the boys were nothing loath.

"Now we must explore," Nicole said when the excellent meal was over.

"Shall we buy a guide-book?" Simon asked, "or how shall we manage?"

"Just let's wander down South Street. I was here once as a child, and I remember we went along South Street to the Tower and the dungeons."

"I want to see the dungeons," said Arthur, "don't you, Sprat?"

"Yes," Alastair said firmly. Then: "What are they?"

"Queen Mary's house is somewhere here," Nicole said as they walked along the old street. "I've forgotten my history books, but I remember *The Queen's Quair*. It says that in St. Andrew's the Queen lodged in a plain house where simplicity was the rule, and that the ladies wore short kirtles and gossiped with fishwives on the shore, rode out with hawks over the dunes, and walked on the sands of the bay when the tide was down. And Darnley came here, that 'long lad.' St. Andrew's will always in a way belong to Queen Mary. I wonder if her story will ever lose its fascination?"

"Never," said Simon, "so long as there are men and women to listen."

Alastair was holding Simon's hand. "Tell me the story," he begged.

Simon looked down at the small face. "I'm afraid, my Bat, it wouldn't interest you. Mary was Queen of Scotland, but she had been brought up in France and had learned to love sunshine and gaiety and courtly manners—everything that we haven't much of. Then she came to Scotland and found grey skies, and thought the people rough and unmannerly, and all round her were enemies, and though she had some loyal friends, they couldn't keep her from making nets for her own feet, and the enemies put her in prison and in the end they killed her."

"What a rotten shame!" said Arthur.

"But why did they kill the Queen if she was good?" Alastair asked. "She was good, wasn't she?"

"Perhaps not always," Nicole said, "but she never had a chance." She turned to Simon. "I'm always being rebuked for my tiresome habit of quoting things, so now I hardly dare to; but do you know the lines Marion Angus wrote?" and she repeated:

"Consider the way she had to go,
Think of the hungry snare!
The nets she herself had woven,
Aware or unaware,
Of the dancing feet grown still,
The blinded eyes—
Queens should be cold and wise.
And she loved little things,
Parrots
And red-legged partridges
And the golden fishes of the Duc de Guise
And the pigeon with the blue ruff
She had from Monsieur d'Elbeuf—"

"Poor little soul!" said Simon. "'Queens should be cold and wise.' Imagine her here

THE PROPER PLACE

in this grey place, surrounded by men who wished her ill, she who loved little things!"

When they reached the ruins of the cathedral—"Who knocked it down?" Alastair asked.

"Perhaps Arthur can tell us," Nicole suggested; but that worthy shook his head. "Don't know," he said; "but anyway it wasn't me," a reply which struck Alastair as the height of wit.

"Now listen," Nicole said. "John Knox had it destroyed. '*Pull down the nests*,' he said, '*and the rooks will fly away*.'"

"The old blighter!" said Arthur. "What about the poor rooks? They'd have to build other nests."

"By rooks he meant priests," Nicole explained, "or, anyway, papists. Oh, he was a root-and-branch man, this same John Knox. Old Betsy says 'Mary was a besom, but auld John Knox was a guid man, and he made a graund job o' oor Reformation.'"

"John Knox is a friend of Aunt Janet's," Alastair announced. "We've a picture of him in a long white beard. Are these all tombstones, like those we have in Kirkmeikle?"

"Yes," said Nicole, reading one here and there. "I've all my countrymen's passion for a graveyard. I can wander contentedly for hours and read epitaphs. Just look at this one—" She spelt out the name and made out that the man who lay here had once occupied the Chair of Logic in St. Andrew's University. "And his family extends to both sides of the stone. I make fifteen; how many do you make? Ensigns and cornets—most of them seem to have gone to India. Well, I do call that a good day's work. Three wives, fifteen children and a long useful life teaching logic! . . . And now it's going to rain, so we'd better see the dungeons at once."

After the dungeons had been gloated over the rain drove them into a cinema for an hour before tea. It was the first time Alastair had ever been in one, and Arthur instructed him. "They're not real people, you know; they're only pictures."

But even in the cinema Arthur was tried by his friend's too spontaneous behaviour, for not only did he laugh long and loud at the funny parts, but he insisted on addressing the actors who were "featured" on the screen. "I don't like the look of you," he told the villain. Against the driver, who did not stop the train as quickly as seemed necessary when the hero and his horse lay helpless on the line, his rage knew no

bounds. Standing on his feet, with his hands clenched, he muttered against him. Towards the heroine he felt nothing but disgust. When in the "close-up" she was shown with large tears in her eyes he could hardly bear it, and when the hero clasped her in a close and prolonged embrace, he nudged Arthur crossly to know what they were doing. "Kissing," hissed Arthur shamefacedly, adding: "The silly asses!"

One wonders what Miss Symington thought of her nephew's adventures when he related them on his return—a medley of mouth-organs, ginger beer in hotels, bottle-dungeons and John Knox, Queen Mary being killed by wicked people, ladies kissing men, and trains that wouldn't stop though a poor horse was going to be run over.

Alastair had yet another new experience during those Christmas holidays.

"Nikky," Arthur said to his cousin one night, "the Sprat's fearfully keen to go to something called a 'swaree.' He says you get a 'poke' and a 'service of fruit,' and he wants me to go with him."

Nicole laughed. "But, Arthur, have you any idea what a church *soirée* is like? True you get tea and a poke, but after that there are speeches and all sorts of dull things. I know what has fired the Sprat's imagination—the service of fruit. But I'm afraid he'd find it very disappointing."

"I don't think so, anyway, it'd be fine to come home late. The Sprat's never been out at night."

"When is it? To-morrow? Well, I'll see what Miss Symington says."

The next morning Nicole went to the Manse to ask for particulars and found Mrs. Lambert in the study with clean towels over her arm.

"I've got stuck here," she explained, "when I should be getting the spare room ready for Mr. Bain, of Kirkleven; he's coming for the Sunday school social to-night. You see, John has to take the chair, and I'm trying to give him some useful hints."

"I wish you'd let it alone just now," said Mr. Lambert. "Dear me, girl, can't you see I'm busy?"

"Yes; but this is your job just as much as the other. *Please* don't go, Miss Rutherford. Take that chair by the fire and help me to convince my husband that a chairman must be both bright and tactful."

"T-terrible!" said Mr. Lambert.

"Terrible indeed," agreed Nicole, "but necessary. I've taken the chair myself some-

THE QUIVER

times, and I know how one has to smile and smile and be an idiot——"

"And whatever you do, John," his wife continued, "be sure and praise Mr. Lawson, or we won't see the right side of his face for weeks." She turned to Nicole and explained: "Mr. Lawson is the superintendent of the Sunday school, a decent man but dreadfully easily slighted. And talk about the teaching, John, and say something encouraging about the work. And when someone is singing, don't just say coldly, 'Miss So-and-so will sing,' as if she had forced her way in; say something about how fortunate we are to have Miss So-and-so with us to-night—you know the sort of thing."

"Yes, yes, girl; I'll remember about Lawson and the teachers, only do stop now. . . . Miss Rutherford, I wonder who invented social meetings. He did an ill turn to ministers."

"Not to all ministers," his wife reminded him. "Mr. Bain simply lives for them. He's the best *soirée* speaker in these parts, Miss Rutherford, and we're lucky to get him to-night."

"Please tell me," said Nicole. "May anyone go to-night?"

"Adults, ninepence," Mr. Lambert responded gloomily.

"Oh! Does that cover a poke and a service of fruit? Because both Arthur and Alastair are keen to taste of those delights, and I'm going now to beg Miss Symington to let Alastair go with us."

"Do come. It would be so cheering to see you there, Miss Rutherford," Mrs. Lambert said, but her husband only smiled sardonically.

Miss Symington gave the desired permission. Alastair might go with Arthur and Nicole, and Annie, who would also be at the social, would take him home. The show began at seven o'clock, so Lady Jane said instead of dinner there would be supper at nine o'clock. Nicole tried to persuade Barbara to join the party, but she refused. Simon Beckett, however, accepted an invitation given by Arthur, and the four started in great spirits.

The *soirée* was held in the church, which seemed odd to Simon's English eyes; but Nicole told him that in her opinion it would not hurt even a sacred building to see a lot of happy children take their tea, even though they did explode their "pokes," when empty, with a loud bang.

The "poke" in question consisted of a cookie, a scone, a parkin, and an iced cake

from which the icing had peeled and distributed itself over the other contents.

In the choir-seat a table was spread with a white cloth covered with more choice viands than were provided for the multitude, and at it sat Mr. Lambert, the superintendent of the Sunday school, and Mr. Bain, who had come to speak. Mr. Lambert wore a strained expression.

When Nicole volunteered to help with the tea, Mrs. Lambert, very busy with tea-kettles, pointed her to the choir-seat which was doing duty as a platform. "If you'd take them that teapot. There's cream and sugar on the table; they don't get ordinary, ready-mixed *soirée* tea."

Nicole nodded. "I see—how beautiful they are, the lordly ones!"

She mounted the platform and was introduced to the two men she did not know, and gave them tea, and received in turn many fair speeches from the jokesome Mr. Bain. Simon, meantime, helped Mrs. Lambert with the heavy kettles.

"Boys all right?" Nicole asked as she passed him.

"They seem so. The way the Bat's wolfing the contents of that bag is a poor compliment to the tea Miss Jamieson gave him a short time ago."

"Ah! but think how good, how different, things taste when eaten out of a poke in a hot steamy atmosphere along with fifty other children! I think everybody's about finished eating now. I wonder what happens next?"

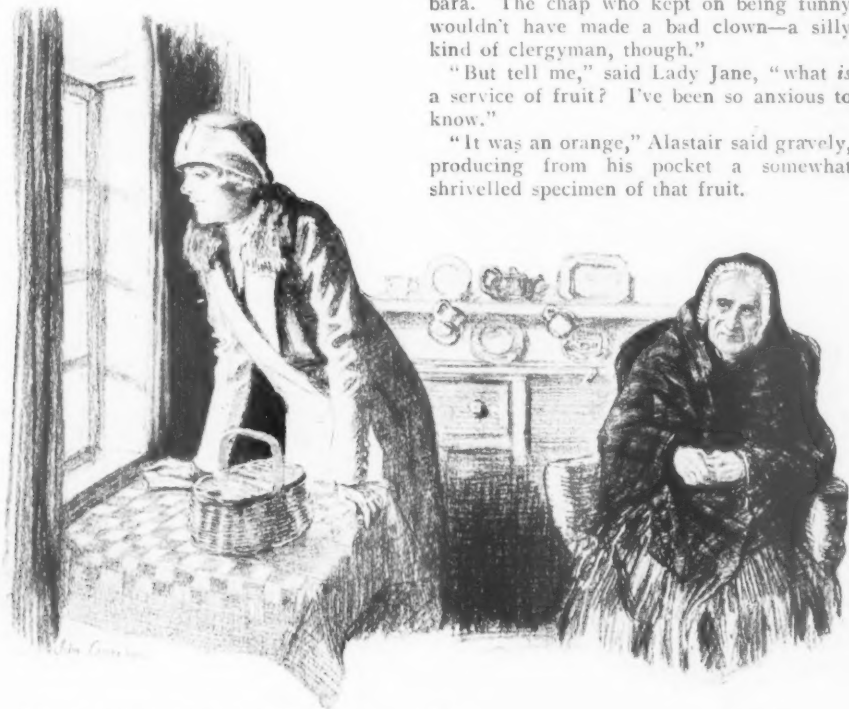
A hymn was given out, an old-fashioned, sweet hymn which the children knew and sang with gusto—"When Mothers of Salem." Then Mr. Lambert rose to his feet. He smiled nervously and said he was glad to see such a good turn-out of children and also of parents. Then followed a few sentences in which Nicole recognized an attempt to follow his wife's advice to try to be bright. It was galvanized mirth, and she was thankful when he ceased the effort and gave a very short, very sincere address to the children. He finished and sat down, and his eyes wandered to where his wife sat. She was obviously dissatisfied. What message was she trying to send him? Ah! the superintendent—the teachers—— He got to his feet again! The situation was saved.

A stalwart young woman sang "The Holy City," then came the feature of the evening. Mr. Bain, advancing to the front of the choir-seat, and rubbing his hands as if

THE PROPER PLACE

in anticipation of his own treat, began. It was *soirée*-speaking in its finest flower. Everything in heaven and earth seemed to remind the speaker of a funny story, and his audience rocked with laughter.

"Look!" whispered Nicole to Simon. "Do just look at Arthur and the Bat!"



"Nicole looked out of the little window. 'See the sun on the water, Betsy,' she said"—p. 381

Drawn by
John Cameron

Arthur was sitting looking absolutely blank, evidently thoroughly bored with Mr. Bain's efforts. Alastair, on the other hand, seemed to sympathize with the theory that "Every chap likes a hand," for he was applauding vociferously, his face radiant.

"Arthur," said Simon, "evidently believes with Dr. Johnson that the merriment of parsons is mighty offensive."

The meeting was over before nine o'clock, so they carried Alastair and Gentle Annie back to the Harbour House for a drink of lemonade, a beverage which Alastair's soul loved.

Arthur, who was in great spirits about staying up late and having supper with Simon Beckett, nudged Alastair and asked:

"Did you like it, Bat-Sprat? Was it fine?"

And Alastair lifted his face from the lemonade glass and said: "*Fine*. This lemonade is so nice and prickly."

"You get treats here, Arthur," Barbara said. "A 'swarce' is far before a pantomime."

"Rather like a pantomime, Cousin Barbara. The chap who kept on being funny wouldn't have made a bad clown—a silly kind of clergyman, though."

"But tell me," said Lady Jane, "what is a service of fruit? I've been so anxious to know."

"It was an orange," Alastair said gravely, producing from his pocket a somewhat shrivelled specimen of that fruit.

"Have mine, Sprat," said Arthur. "Mine's a goodlier one."

"*An orange!*" said Lady Jane. "And I expected at the very least bells and pomegranates!"

CHAPTER XIX

"What's to come now is still unsure."
—*Twelfth Night*.

BARBARA took Arthur back to school, as she professed herself unable to live any longer without a breath of London air and the sight of her friends.

It was quiet and strange to Nicole and her mother without the boy. In the short time he had lived with them he had made

THE QUIVER

a place for himself, and every way they turned there was a gap.

"Barbara was wise," Nicole said. "It's the people who stay at home who do the worst of the missing."

She and her mother were sitting in the dusk doing nothing. Arthur would never have allowed them such a time of idleness. He had always clamoured for light, in order to go on with whatever particular bit of business he was engaged on at the moment, which might be anything from an attempt to make a wireless set to the laborious penning of a blotted epistle (he was no scholar) to his fever-stricken brother and sister.

"Yes," Lady Jane agreed, "it was wonderfully nice having a boy in the house—the sound of his heavy boots on the stairs, the way he had of knocking up against things, the way he whistled and sang, refreshed one, somehow. There is something stagnant about the air of a house that contains only women."

Nicole laughed. "My dear, you make the most remarkable statements in that gentle voice of yours. How angry some women would be to hear you! I know what you mean, and in a way, I agree. No matter how well women get on together, how much at one they are, there's a lack of vibration, so to speak. We are too neat, too tidy, too regular in our ways. A man is like a strong wind blowing through the house: his boots are muddy and he smells of fresh air, and pipes, and peat-smoked tweeds. And his views on life are different! And his voice. . . . One gets tired of women's voices, they're so peepy."

Just then Christina's voice in the dusk announced: "Mr. Beckett."

"How odd!" said Nicole, as the visitor found his way cautiously to the fireside.

"What is?"

"That you should come in at this moment. . . . We were talking, Mums and I, about men, and agreeing that life is a little stagnant without them—almost too peaceful. We're missing Arthur, you see— We'll not have the lights yet, Christina."

"I'm missing Arthur too," Simon confessed as he settled himself into a chair. "He's a fine little chap. He ought to do well at Eton—he's such a tremendous respect for tradition."

"He has indeed," Nicole laughed. "Can you imagine two boys more utterly different than Arthur and Alastair? Arthur rather arrogant and intolerant, as self-conscious as

he can be, and with it all a very decent lad, and Alastair, the friendliest little mortal on earth, not caring what anyone thinks, but just set on his own odd opinions! And they were such good friends. Arthur adored the Sprat. I don't wonder. There is something about that fantastic little face and the too-large overcoat that makes my heart turn to water in the most ridiculous way. . . . By the way, we didn't ask, have you had tea?"

"Yes, thanks. I'm just back from a long tramp."

Nicole laid cigarettes and matches on the table beside him, while her mother said:

"Nikky, you've always been a slave to little boys. Providence must have intended you to be matron in a preparatory school. You would so utterly have enjoyed comforting them when they arrived homesick, and giving them a good time when they had measles or mumps—"

"Yes, I only wish I had been Alastair's aunt instead of Miss Symington. Not that she isn't good to him, and she's certainly a far better instructor for youth than I am, but—a child cannot live by bread alone."

Simon reached for an ash-tray. "The great lack about Miss Symington," he said, "is that she can put no glamour into things. Life to her is just so many days to be devoted to work, meals, and—in strict moderation—play. Everything is what it seems, and she is merely grieved when the Bat tries to liven up things by telling her he has found an elephant's nest in the garden. Whereas some people can make even a dull job like supping rice pudding into a thing of delight to a child. . . . I remember my mother used to make a quarry in the middle and fill it up with milk, and tell us a story about it until it all went down. I can't imagine Miss Symington telling a story; I can't imagine her making believe. I dare say all that sort of thing can be carried too far, but when it's never there at all the child misses a lot."

Lady Jane took up her embroidery frame. "I shouldn't think," she said, as she sorted her various silks, "that your childhood was wanting in glamour."

Simon turned to her with a smile.

"No," he said. "There were three boys of us with no sister, but my mother was so young and jolly we never missed one. She loved to bird's-nest with us, and didn't mind a bit lying for hours in swampy places, and she rode with us, and played cricket and tennis. . . . My mother used to say that

THE PROPER PLACE

she had to be extra kind to me because I was the middle one—Ralph was important being the eldest, and Harry as the youngest had been petted, but I had to fight for my own hand. The three of us were pretty near an age, and tremendous friends. . . . I can remember getting home for holidays in winter, when Mother made toffee and roasted chestnuts in the school-room, and we tried who could tell the weirdest ghost-story; and spring mornings when we got up at six and went away through the meadows; and long summer nights in the Highlands where my father rented a stretch of river. . . . My mother died in 1916, when we were all away from her. Ralph was with his ship, I was in the trenches—Harry had been shot down while flying. She worked too hard and got pneumonia, but it was really Harry's going and the anxiety about Ralph and me that killed her. Father said so."

There was silence for a minute, then Simon said:

"Ralph died at Zeebrugge. My father was a good deal older than my mother and after she went he seemed suddenly to become an old man: not keen and interested any more, but as if he had come to an end of hope. When the news came that Ralph had gone he just seemed to give it up, and only lived a month after him—so I'm alone, you see. . . ."

His voice trailed into silence.

Nicole knelt down to stir the fire. "We must have light," she said. "Can you find the switch, Mr. Beckett? Dear me, how we blink! Like owls in the sunlight."

She got up to pull the curtains, standing for a few minutes to look out. When she went back to the fireside, her mother and Simon were deep in talk. Simon was speaking:

"I was always very keen on climbing and had done a good deal, and it was a tremendous chance to be allowed to join the Everest expedition. And then, you see, I had nobody to be anxious about me. I suppose I was lucky not having to feel selfish about leaving people—but that cuts both ways, for I admit it was pretty beastly to come home and have practically no one to tell—"

"And the book?" said Lady Jane. "I'm afraid you must have got very little done lately. You gave so much of your time to Arthur."

"Oh, you'd wonder! I've begun to re-write and polish. At present there's hardly

a decently put sentence in it! So I've my work cut out for me."

"Don't they say hard writing makes easy reading? Probably what you write will be much pleasanter to read than the outpourings of a facile pen. I should think that must be the undoing of many writers—you know, the knack of writing blithely on and on."

"Perhaps," Simon said. "Anyway, it's beyond me. I sit in awe of the people who can write page after page about nothing. Bare facts baldly narrated—that's my style!"

He laughed and helped himself to a cigarette.

"And when you finish it," said Lady Jane, "will you leave Kirkmeikle? For in that case—"

"Finished or not, I must leave in March. The preparations for the next expedition are being made, and I'm going out before the others. There's a tremendous lot to do—you'd wonder—both here and out there—"

Lady Jane was threading her needle with a strand of bright silk. She stuck it into her embroidery and leant forward to the young man.

"But—you don't mean that you are going to make another attempt—that you are going back? Oh, surely not!"

Going back! Simon! Nicole sat very still and said not a word.

Simon looked at Lady Jane gratefully. "It's jolly nice of you to care. . . . Your kindness to me has been wonderful. Of course I'm going back. I was desperately afraid I wouldn't be fit enough, but the doctors say now I'm all right. And Kirkmeikle air has completely set me up. Odd how reluctant I am to leave the little town—"

The door opened. "Mr. Lambert," said Christina, and the little clergyman ambled in, a book under either arm.

"I'm not going to stay," he announced. "Good evening—good evening. I only came with these books in case you wanted to return them." He looked at the books as if loath to part from them, and laid them on the edge of a table, from which they quickly descended to the ground accompanied by a glass of flowers. "D-dear me! What a mess! Flower vases are awkward things!"

"So they are," said Nicole, springing to the rescue. "The books are hardly touched—we'll rub them up and they won't be a bit the worse. Once I put marmalade on

THE QUIVER

Marius the Epicurean, and it improved him vastly, gave him a lovely polish."

"I d-daresay," Mr. Lambert began, "that if Pater—" then he stopped, for Simon was on his feet saying good-bye. "Wait a moment, Beckett, and I'll go with you. There is something I want to talk to you about. . . ."

But Simon hurriedly apologized and left.

CHAPTER XX

"From you have I been absent in the spring."
—"SONNETS," BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

THE days passed, short stormy January days melting into February with its hint of spring.

One mild day when the blackbirds were trying their notes, Nicole wrote to her friend Jean Douglas:

This is the sort of day that makes me simply long for Rutherford. The snowdrops will be in drifts by the burnside now. How often I've stood under a steel-grey sky, with a north wind blowing, and looked at the brave little advance army of spring poking their heads through the golden beech-leaves of a dead October. To-day I'm positively hungry for Rutherford. How gladly would I turn the Jacksons out neck and crop, if only I had the fairy whistle! *Everything in its proper place* I would pipe, and positively laugh to see them scuttle! . . .

After that outburst I shall write, I hope, in a better spirit. You see, I can only say it to you. I daren't breathe a word of discontent here in case of rousing sleeping fires of desire in mother and Barbara. Poor Babs does miss the old life so badly. Mother never says she misses anything, and is always cheerful and willing to be amused, only—laughter can be sadder than tears sometimes. She still, at times, has an air of sitting so loosely to the things of earth that Babs and I want to clutch at her skirts to keep her with us all.

Things amble along as usual. I said this morning, "I do wish Mistress Jean would pay us a visit!" The others echoed the wish, only Babs was sceptical about our power to entertain you—but I think you would be quite well amused. What fun it would be to get the best guest room ready for you: to find flowers for it—flowers are a great difficulty here as the nearest florist is in Langtoun and he sells mostly vegetables!—and to choose books for your bed-table that you would like. And you would lie in bed in the morning and listen to voices underneath your windows, fisher-laddies talking with their Fife tilt, foreign sailor-men, fish-wives crying "Hawdies, fresh hawdies!" and smell, through the lavender of the bed-linen, the salt, tarry smell of the harbour.

And what else can I offer you? We would explore the East Neuk, you and I, and I wonder if you know St. Andrews. If not, there are fascinating things to see there. And, of course, you would meet all our new friends:

I shouldn't wonder if Mrs. Heggie made a dinner party for you, and you would enjoy the comedy of that good lady and Barbara. Barbara is always putting Mrs. Heggie in her place, but her efforts are quite lost on the dear soul, for she has no notion what her place is or that she has ever strayed from it. She admires Barbara immensely—licks the hand that beats her, so to speak. She tells me mother is her idea of a *grande dame*, but she doesn't quite understand where I get my democratic ways—*Alas, poor Yorick!*

Miss Symington you would have to go and see, though probably you'd find her supremely uninteresting, with her ugly clothes and her bleak house and her still ways. But I think you'd like Dr. Kilgour and his nice funny sister, and it would be most disappointing if you didn't appreciate my friends the Lamberts. It does make me feel ashamed of myself when I go to the Manse of a morning, to take the babies out, to find Mrs. Lambert conning over her address for the Mothers' Meeting while she stirs a milk pudding for the early dinner. Her great cross is having to speak in public and open meetings with prayer, but she does it, the valiant little person. I now and again go with her to the Mothers' Meeting to help with the singing and play Sankey's hymns on the harmonium; and to hear her read the Bible is an inspiration. It is no dusty, far-away history when she reads it. She is so interested in it herself that she makes it sound like Stanley Weyman, and the women sit back with a sigh when she finishes.

She has a small, transparent face like a wood anemone, and I'm always afraid she'll wear herself out of existence; but you mustn't think Mr. Lambert is idle. He helps her in a hundred ways, and writes his sermons with a baby rolling on the floor at his feet—and very good sermons they are. He keeps the garden and goes messages and does all the odd carpenter's jobs about the house. The only thing his wife cannot get him to do is gush. To her most frantic appeals to be "frank" to some person he can only manage a cold handshake and a bald sentence. I've seen her turn on him a face, half vexed, half amused, as she said, "Oh, John, you're a dry character!"

Odd, isn't it, that there are one or two words that have a different meaning in Scots? English people mean by "frank," honest and open! here "frank" means free: a frank manner is a forthcoming, gushing manner. Canny is another word. It really means cunning; but in Scotland it means gentle—"Canny wee thing!"

Well! Is that all I've got to offer you? Not quite. Barbara will want you to know her friends the Erskines. They are a great support to her, and she goes over a good deal to their place and meets people she likes, and they come here. Mother and I like them very much, but it's difficult taking an interest in new people, I find. Babs retorts that I manage to be interested in the Kirkmickle people, but they are different, more human, somehow, and pitiful. The Erskines are so sure of themselves—prosperous, invulnerable.

And you might possibly be invited to lunch with Mr. and Mrs. Bucklers. Their lives have been full of colour and interest—thirty years in

THE PROPER PLACE

India—but they haven't brought much of either away with them. They are oddly interested in things like disrespectful parlour-maids—so after all, what does it profit a man to see the world?

I wonder if you stayed a week with us, consorting daily with Kirkmeikle people, would you say, like Babs, that you were sick of honest worth? She says she is driven to Michael Arlen in sheer self-defence. To forget Mrs. Heggie and Miss Janet Symington she reads of ladies reclining in slenderness on divans, playing with rosaries of black pearls, and eating scented macaroons out of bowls of white jade!

This is a long letter all about nothing. Your last letter was a joy. Cannes must have been lovely. How could you tear yourselves away?—but of course I know that Colonel Douglas is never really happy anywhere except at Kings-house. You will be home now, lucky people. Write when you have time and tell me all about everybody.—Your loving
NIKKY.

Nicole, having finished her letter, sat on at the writing-table looking before her. A letter all about nothing, indeed! But somehow there was nothing of interest anywhere these days—life was flat and stale, and Simon Beckett was going away.

Well: Nicole gave herself a mental shake as she put her letter into an envelope, and straightened the writing things on the table. It must be the hint of spring in the air that was making her feel foolish and sentimental; besides, it was Saturday afternoon, always a depressing time somehow, and her mother and Barbara had motored off to have tea at a distance, and Alastair had gone with Simon in the latter's car, to Langtoun, to see a football match. She had preferred to stay at home, thinking it would be pleasant to have a long afternoon for letter-writing, but she found she wasn't liking it at all. She would go out, she decided, and talk to old Betsy for a little, and then walk very fast round the links and try to walk off that curious depression which had suddenly enveloped her.

She found Betsy in a distinctly bad humour. Saturday afternoon seemed to have cast a blight on her spirits also. She had paid somebody twopence to sand her stair, and was not pleased with the way it had been done.

"But it's just like everything else," she grumbled. "The folk nowadays winna work. They dinna ken what work means—them and their eight hours' day! Labour-ites they ca' theistsels. What they're lookin' for is a country whaur folk wad be hangit for workin'. . . . An' the Government's tae support a'boddy! Ye'd think to hear them that the Government could pick up siller in gowpins. Ay, thae folk next door ca'

theirsels Labour, but efter the way the wumman washed my stair I'll naither dab nor pick wi' them."

"But," said Nicole, "the stair looked to me very clean. I just thought as I came up how fresh everything was, all ready for the Sabbath day. And it's February, Betsy, and almost spring. The last time I was here it was Christmas."

"Weel, better something lang than naething sune, but I was wonderin' what had come ower ye. . . . But her leddyship's awfu' attentive. I div like to see her, an' we've sic graund cracks aboot oor ain place an' she reads to me whiles, for ma sicht's no what it was—sic a bonnie speaker she is! There's a lot o' folk awful queer pronouncers o' words; ye wud suppose they were readin' the buik upside down. The man next door cam in and read me oot o' a paper, but losh! I was nane the wiser when he feenished. . . ."

"You've lots of visitors, Betsy, haven't you? And you take such an interest in everything that goes on."

"Oh, I dae that, an' though I canna steer ower the door, verra little passes me. There's aye somebody to gie me a cryin an' tell me what's gaun on. Ye see, I'm aye here, an' folk like a listener. . . . Did ye hear that ma son's been lyin' . . .? Ay, it started wi' influenzy and syne it was pewmoney. Ma gudedochter cam to see me the nicht afore last; she's that ill at Dr. Kilgour, the dowgs wadna lick his bluid efter the names she ca'ed him."

"Why?" asked Nicole, startled. "What has Dr. Kilgour done?"

"Oh, when he cam an' fand Tam sae faur through he gaed her a ragin' an' said he should hae been there lang syne. An' he sterted an' pu'ed down the windey—she keeps the windeys shut for fear o' dust comin' in—an' he was that gurril aboot it that he broke a cheeny ornament."

"But your son's getting better?"

"Oh, ay, he is that. Dr. Kilgour's a skilly doctor, but he's offended ma gudedochter." Betsy smiled grimly. "Aw' he tell't some o' the wives aboot here that they had nae richt to hev bairns at a'; they didna ken hoo tae handle them. That's true eneuch. I've often said ye wad suppose it was broken bottles they hed in their arms."

Nicole laughed as she rose to go. "Dr. Kilgour's not afraid to speak his mind." She looked out of the little window. "See the sun on the water, Betsy! You'll admit Kirkmeikle is a nice little town."

THE QUIVER

But Betsy shook her head. "I see nae-thing in it. I never cared for a town. I aye likit the hill-sides and the sheep. . . . Eh, wasna it bonnie tae see the foals rinnin' efter their mithers, an' the meats stannin' still to let them sook?"

"Very bonnie. And now I'm going to put your tea ready for you. Mrs. Martin sent a gingerbread and I know you like a bit of country butter and some cream at a time. These are fresh eggs." Nicole was unpacking her basket as she spoke.

"Weel," said Betsy, watching her, "what's guid to gie shouldna be ill tae take. It's sic a thocht to move an' I'm that blind, that whiles I juist dinna bother aboot ony tea, but a cup'll be gratefu' the noo. Thank ye kindly, Miss. . . . Na, na, I manage fine. Agnes Martin comes in every nicht when she gets the dinner cooked, an' sees me tae ma bed, an' pits athing richt for the mornin'. . . . Ay, I'm weel aff wi' her. . . ."

When Nicole was going up the brae towards the links she met Janet Symington walking with a man. She immediately found herself wondering who he could be, and smiled to think she was becoming as inquisitive as Betsy herself. Then she remembered that it was Saturday. Of course, this was one of the preachers.

He was a tall man with a large, soft face, and evidently quite a flow of conversation, for Miss Symington was walking with her head bent, listening attentively. Looking up she saw Nicole and half-stopped. Nicole also hesitated, and presently found herself being introduced to Mr. Samuel Innes. He held out a large, soft hand—"He shakes hands as if he had a poached egg in the palm," thought Nicole—and uttered a few remarks about the weather in the softest voice she had ever heard in a man.

"Mr. Innes is going to speak at the Hall to-morrow night," Miss Symington said. "It's always a treat to have him."

"Not at all," said Mr. Innes, while Nicole faltered: "That is very nice. I hope it will be a good day."

"There's always a good turn-out when it is Mr. Innes," said Miss Symington, looking up at her companion with what in anyone else would have been called a smirk.

Mr. Innes repeated "Not at all," and Nicole, making hasty adieux, fled.

"Now I wonder," she said to herself as she stood a minute looking out to sea, "I wonder if that gentleman means to hang up his hat, to use Mrs. Heggie's descriptive phrase! . . . Mr. Samuel Innes! What a perfect Angel he makes—"

(To be continued)



Feeding the Gulls in Winter-time: A London study

(Photo: "The Times")

Westminster from Within

Parliament in Session

By

E. Havers Rutherford

The author has just retired from the Press Gallery of the House of Commons after many years' service; he therefore writes from personal knowledge.

IT is a common saying of that mythical individual, the man in the street, that Parliament is played out, that he himself takes no interest in politics, and that the institution which has met in the shadow of Westminster Abbey for more than six hundred years is an idol with feet of clay that has outstayed its welcome in our national life and ought to be cast into outer darkness.

Parliament is not played out. After an intimate experience of many years of the work of both Houses, after close observation of its influence on national life and its responsiveness to national aspirations, I assert that Parliament to-day is stronger than ever and fulfils a worthier purpose now than it has done during its history.

Where Rich and Poor Meet

Look at its composition. Within living memory it was the close preserve of the cadets of noble houses, of country squires, of wealthy industrialists. In the days of the unpaid member a man had need of a long purse to maintain his status at Westminster, and it was almost hopeless for the working man to aspire to entrance, let alone honours in the council chamber of the nation.

But to-day there is none so poor but can do it reverence. The son of the dustman sits with the son of the duke; the Oxford accent clashes with the dialect of Clydeside or the "aitchless" oratory of some member from the factory or the field. Moreover, the gracious presence of lady members has not only had its effect in opening the mind of Parliament to social subjects which it had previously considered beyond its ken, but, I venture to think, in softening the asperities of debate.

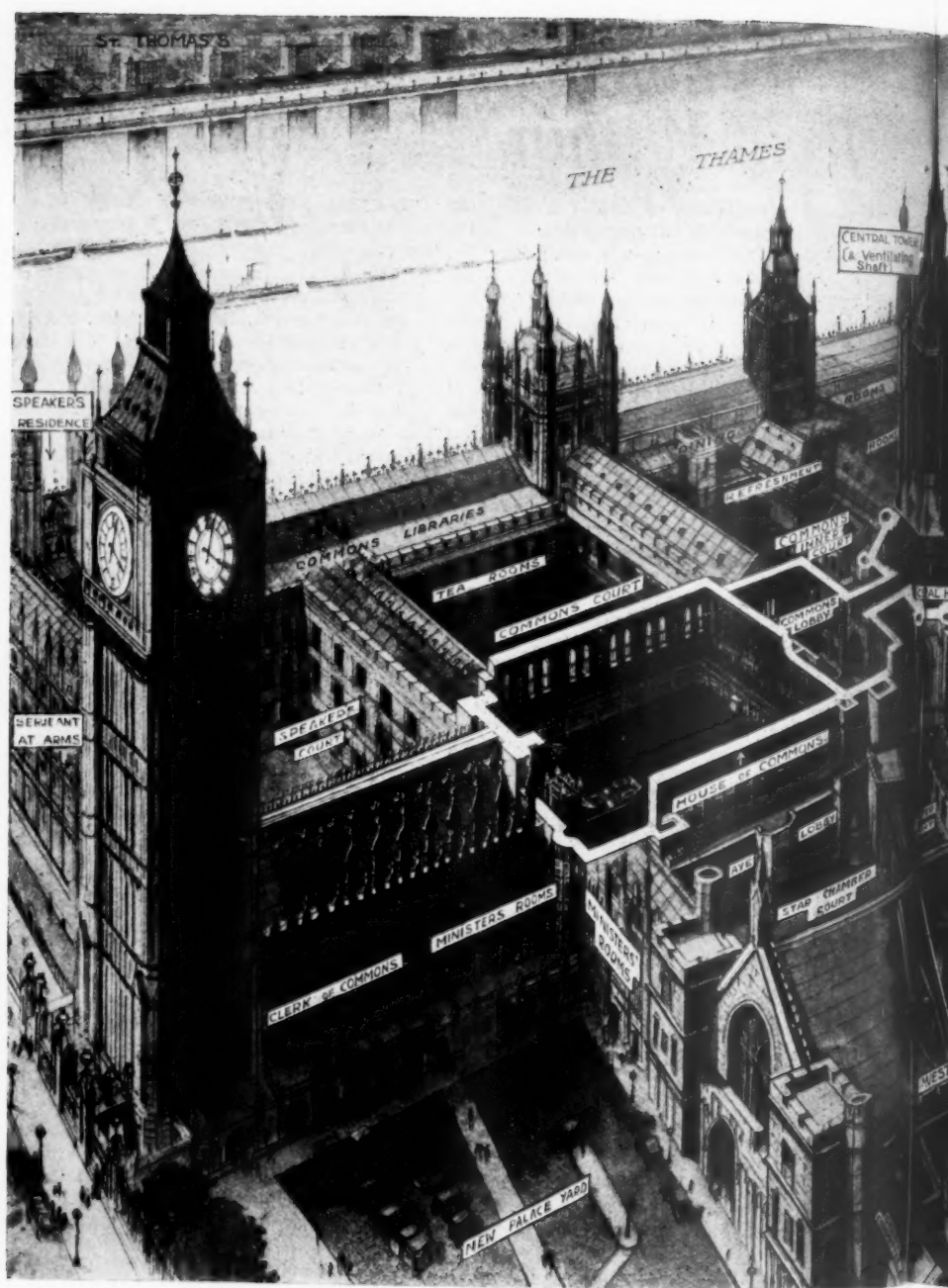
Parliament more than ever is broad-based upon the people's will, and the House which reassembles this coming month for a half-year's term of legislative business is more the focus of national interests than any Parliament that has gone before.

The number and significance of parties is shown in the demand for a House of Commons building which shall be at once larger and more convenient for its members. While Sir Charles Barry was often criticized for having built a chamber far too small to accommodate the full muster-roll of Parliament, it was often urged that he built sufficiently large for the average attendance of members. When you see a mere handful of M.P.'s passing millions of money in votes as easily as they would post letters, you may think the House fulfils all requirements; but the fact remains that on big occasions, such as the election of a Speaker, or the introduction of a Budget, it is far too small for its purpose.

When there were only two parties in the State—Liberal and Conservative—it was well that they should face one another on the green benches ranged in opposition. They were roughly divided into two halves, and the arrangement sufficed. But to-day two-thirds of the members are Conservatives, nearly a quarter are Labour members, and the remainder consist of Liberals and various adherents. Some day Parliament, in its belated wisdom, will recognize the fact that the only proper accommodation is on the half-circle plan, as adopted in the French Chamber and the German Reichstag, giving each member his allotted seat and possibly a desk, from which he may follow the debates in greater comfort and the lid of which he may clatter in applause or disapproval.

Accommodation and Oratory

The effect of accommodation on oratory is plain to any close observer of the House of Commons in session. In those days of political misfortune which immediately preceded Mr. Asquith's departure for the House of Lords, his seat was below the gangway, but whenever he rose to make an important speech he was greeted with cries of "Box! Box!"



"Parliament
with the lid off"

THE QUIVER

from friends and opponents alike, and in response to a wish that was almost a command, he moved to the place at the Table from which he had often addressed the House before his party had shrunk to its present dimensions. I think he always spoke better and more freely from that position.

Mr. Baldwin

Mr. Baldwin seems indifferent to these adventitious aids. So long as he has a place where he can rest his notes or lean a comforting arm, he is content. His famous speech, "Give peace in our time, O Lord," was made almost without a gesture. Mr. Winston Churchill cannot be confined to the space on which he can plant his two feet. He was ever a fighter, and demands all the space that may be his, and sometimes a little more, between the Table and the front bench occupied by members of the Government, where he may stamp forward in the direction of his opponents, swing round in appeal to his friends, or fling out an angry arm as he turns to assail an opponent below the gangway. Mr. Churchill's oratory is not that of the tongue and brain alone, it comes from every fibre of his body.

The effect of position in cramping the oratorical style was seen in Mr. Lloyd George immediately after the collapse of the Coalition Government, of which he was the head and inspiration. For sixteen years he had been accustomed to the ease and freedom of the Government preserve, but the fortune of political warfare compelled him, as one of a party of forty-odd Liberals, to take his seat below the gangway on the opposition side of the House.

Not the front seat either: that was reserved for some of the bright but minor sparks of the Conservative party, who had overflowed from the Government side. Mr. Lloyd George, author of the "People's Budget," Prime Minister during the most critical period of the war, one of Britain's signatories to the Peace of Versailles, and Britain's emissary to half a dozen European conferences which followed that settlement, took his place as a private member in the third row of benches. It was like the captain of a great Atlantic liner travelling as a steerage passenger. The physical limitations of the position had its effect on his speeches, at least on the manner of their delivery, for Mr. Lloyd George, like his quondam political colleague, Mr. Winston

Churchill, fights best when his foes are all around him.

In nothing has the appearance of the House of Commons changed so much as in that of dress, and this is largely due to the influx of Labour members. In the days that were earlier, it was the almost invariable custom for members to wear silk hats and to appear in evening dress after dinner, or after the "Speaker's chop." An Irish member is generally given the credit of having been the first to break down the unwritten law as to headgear, to give the House of Commons a shock, as Irish members have often done before and since. Mr. John Martin, one of those gentle, obstinate, immovable men who so often make revolutions, appeared in the far-away 'seventies in a low-crowned, somewhat shabby and discoloured white hat. Mr. Speaker Denison, a very stern man, was so shocked by this sartorial outrage that he sent for the offender and privately remonstrated with him. But Mr. Martin had the same soft invincibility as Carlyle's wife, and stuck to his hat, and then the debacle in hats began. Mr. Keir Hardie came down in a double-peaked cap; Irish members who could not raise the price of a "topper" came in cheaper headgear, and thus by degrees the tradition of the silk hat broke down.

Silk Hats

You see more silk hats in the Lords than the Commons to-day, but a few of them still remain in the Lower House. Mr. Austen Chamberlain would not be seen without his for the world. He dons it when he takes his seat on the Treasury Bench, and when he rises to answer a question he waves it like a thurifer dispensing the incense of his Parliamentary wisdom over a House that ought to be grateful for that blessing, but sometimes is not. Lord Banbury, before he became a peer, continuously affected the silk hat, Sir Henry Craik does now, and Mr. T. P. O'Connor, under the shadow of a generous brim, may frequently be seen surveying with the kindly eye of age the assembly of which he is now the honoured "father." Some of the younger members appear in silk, so to speak; but the majority of them are bareheaded, and when a member has to put a question during a division it is sometimes difficult to find a hat so that his head may be covered according to Parliamentary custom which has come down through the ages. The generous Trilby of

WESTMINSTER FROM WITHIN

Mr. "Jimmy" Sexton has served this purpose more than once; and a man's boater has found its place on the auburn head of Miss Ellen Wilkinson.

Evening dress, I may add, is becoming more and more rare. A bunch of members may sometimes be seen thus apparelled when they have been at a dinner party behind the scenes; but they are the exception rather than the rule. The day has passed when Mr. Lloyd George, in his famous controversy with Mr. Joseph Chamberlain over the South African War, was severely handicapped, it is said, because he was badly dressed and Mr. Chamberlain was not. Mr. Lloyd George is different now; at Versailles, when the Peace Treaty was being negotiated, he was spoken of as the best-dressed statesman in Europe, and few members to this day are better garbed. But the majority have discarded stiff and formal clothes; what they like is a comfortable suit in which they can do their Parliamentary labours.

Has Parliamentary Oratory Declined?

The question is often asked: has Parliamentary oratory declined? Oratory, as such, is not what it was, and it is well that it should be. There was a day when a Chancellor of the Exchequer, intent on spending a few hundred millions, would take five hours to tell the House how he proposed to do it. There was a day when the Leader of the Opposition would rise about ten o'clock at night and consider that he had not done his duty to his Party unless he spoke until, like Falstaff, he "heard the chimes at midnight"; and the Prime Minister would think he had failed in his duty to the State unless he replied at equal if not greater length. Those days of word-spinning are happily gone. It would be a surprise now if a Budget speech ran to three hours—I am excepting Mr. Lloyd George's "People's Budget," which stands in a class by itself. A Budget may run away with a little more time, but a big speech to-day is usually confined to an hour, and the House likes it all the better if less time than that is taken for its delivery. So many men want to speak, so many interests formerly unknown are represented in the House, that the speaker who affects the habit of the Puritan divine and talks while the clock completes the circle is regarded as no friend of his fellow members, and still less of the Press.

More than once an attempt has been made to put a time limit on speeches, but I cannot see the day coming when they will be graded in length for private members, under-secretaries, Ministers, and the Prime Minister. How the members of the Opposition would stand, and what chance would be given to budding Parliamentary genius, is difficult to imagine. The oratorical table of precedence would be more difficult to compile, and far more difficult to work, than that which appears in the gilded pages of Burke.

Parliamentary Manners

As to Parliamentary manners! Here again old Parliamentary fogies, if any be left, are wont to declare that the courtesy of speakers is not what it was, forgetful of the fact that many of the orations which are now accounted great were composed in the solitude of an attic by a Grub Street hack. I admit that the advent of the Labour Party in full force following the General Election of 1923 gave a rude shock to some of the Parliamentary traditions that remained. Many of them had been oratorically trained at the street corner, in the open parks, and at trade meetings where the clash of debate does not always leave room for the niceties of polished language. Moreover, they understood little of the customs by which debates in Parliament had been carried on for generations. They were impatient of opposite views, too impatient to wait their turn and catch the Speaker's eye, and when they became what Mr. Kirkwood calls "irritated," they sometimes flung about such opprobrious terms as "dirty cur," "jackass," and "liar." It may be said that the benches of the other side were not entirely dumb when uncomplimentary epithets were the order of an angry evening.

Not that the remarks were always lacking in humour. Mr. Jack Jones mingles wit and wisdom in a manner which indicates the real fact that, despite his name, he is of Irish origin. "When first I spoke in the House of Commons," he once told a Silver-town audience, "I called the members 'gentlemen,' and I was promptly called upon to apologize. I did not know why at the time, but I have since learnt that the Speaker knew members better than I did."

"The Red Flag"

Sometimes lively words have led to lively scenes. Within my recollection I have heard "The Red Flag" sung; I have seen

THE QUIVER

angry members shaking their fists at the Prime Minister of the day; I have beheld four members, one of them a Minister of the Gospel, suspended in a body after they had defied the authority of the Chair and turned the House into a bear garden for nearly two hours.

"We Will Smash All This!"

At the opening of one Parliament a certain Labour member, gazing at the panoply and display which can only be seen in the House of Lords on such an occasion, said: "We will smash all this." The smashing will be a long time on the way. The House of Commons, tolerant as it is of all individuality and even eccentricity, has a wonderful habit of holding fast to that which is old, especially if it be good, and of making its members conform to the traditions of centuries and even respect them. I have seen one or two members decline to observe the custom of bowing to the Speaker's chair. (That custom, I may say, derives from the fact that the House of Commons is built on the site of the old Chapel of St. Stephen, and the position of the Speaker's chair was once occupied by the altar.) But they came to make that bow in time, and in a short time, too. I have seen them trespass across that line on the carpet which says thus far shalt they go and no farther, but they have been glad to keep within its bounds.

Thus members of eccentric individuality, shall I say, who have come storming to Westminster like Don Quixote charging the windmill, have, in course of time, submitted to Parliament and its usages, and have even come to defend them against succeeding Quixotes. They might shape themselves, if they were only wiser, on the manner of Mr. Robert Smillie, who is accounted a dangerous revolutionary by those who do not know him. He claims to be the champion defeated candidate for Parliament—he was defeated seven times; yet, once there, he is seen to be the mildest-mannered man who ever scuttled a ship. Nothing ruffles him; and in a smooth, soft voice which is mildness itself he enunciates economic doctrines which are regarded as the last word in political and economic heresy by his opponents.

The Ex-Speaker

If the turbulent, obstreperous members to whom I have referred have come to toe the line, if during the coming months of

Parliament we shall hear less of them than we did three years ago, or hear them in a milder key, that is due, in a considerable measure, to Lord Ullswater, who, as Mr. Speaker, handled them firmly but kindly, like a wise father, intent on seeing that they went the better Parliamentary way. He had the saving grace of humour, and many a fiery bubble of crimson anger has disappeared by the discharge of a shaft of that kindly weapon. The Parliamentary education of these members, I may add, has been continued under the wise supervision of Mr. Whitley, by whom the high traditions of the Speaker's office are worthily maintained.

Women Members

The appearance of women members is a slow and laborious process. Since Lady Astor, the first woman member to be seen at St. Stephen's, we have had two elections, in which the woman voter has played a conspicuous part, but so far she is at present accompanied only by three other members of her own sex: the Duchess of Atholl, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, Miss Wilkinson, and Mrs. Philipson. When the last-mentioned was introduced a Labour member, observing what he thought was a rueful expression on Lady Astor's face, now that she had lost the distinction of being the only woman on the Government side, called out encouragingly: "Cheer up, Nancy; cheer up." But the advice was scarcely needed. The fair Virginian is one of the most cheerful members of the present House, and she backs that cheerfulness with courage.

Lady Astor is often found fighting what many regard as forlorn hopes: the drink trade, and especially questions affecting the status of women, and whatever be the temporary setback she comes up smiling again ready for the next attack. Whether her vivacity is a drawback or not I will not pretend to say; nor whether her brilliancy, somewhat too many faceted, will lead to any serious addition to the Statute Book. She is the feminine equivalent of the knight errant rather than a docile member of the Party to which she nominally belongs. One can hardly imagine Lady Astor as second administrator in a great department of State, as the Duchess of Atholl is at the Board of Education; she would be over the traces in a trice. It is sometimes dogged as does it, not always brilliancy.

The HERITORS of the HILL

by
H. Mortimer
Batten,

F.Z.S.



HIGH on the face of Cairn o' Gree, so high that a gunshot in the glen below would have reached the shelf merely in crumbling echoes, the golden eagles had their eyrie, as for many centuries past. Year after year the great pile of sticks had been renovated and added to, so that to-day the fissure in the crag face contained several cart-loads of sticks and ling, and on this seemingly precarious foundation the two down-covered eaglets were hatched. Weak-necked, pot-bellied little imps of hunger they were, and since for many days succeeding their arrival driving sleet and mist swept the mountain face, it took their parents all their time to nurse them through their first tender infancy. For hours the female bird would crouch on the wind side, her wings half spread, occasionally rising to shake the drifts of wet snow from the folds of her feathers, and whatever may be said of the common ruck and run of eagle fathers, this one was an ideal father—and husband. For it was he who fed both them and her.

In those days of bad visibility hunting was not too easy, for even the eagles, despite their swiftness and notorious penetration of sight, know hard times. Not so much in winter, for when others are hungry that is their harvest; it is during the dark days when the mountain hare are under the peat lips and the rabbits cosy in their

crannies, that the great birds of prey are likely to feel the pinch. That spring was, I believe, a season of starvation for many of the birds of prey.

One day a shepherd saw the male eagle gliding down the glen only fifty or sixty feet from the ground. It was merely a flashing glimpse through the mist wraiths, yet sufficient for the man to assure himself that the thing which dangled from the eagle's claws was a newly born lamb. Thereafter, almost daily, the shepherd missed one or more newly born lambs from his flock, and, of course, he blamed the eagles. He omitted to notice that, despite the weather, he was losing no lambs in other ways, and when eventually he solicited the aid of the stalker, that weather-beaten son of the crags suggested to him the common-sense line of inquiry.

"You don't need to worry your head about the eagles, Donald," he said. "Have you ever seen an eagle lift a living lamb? No, nor I, nor any other shepherd or stalker I ever knew. I don't say it never happens, but I never knew it happen in this range."

The shepherd grunted, and, being a Highlander, he thought carefully before he spoke. "Well, maybe, Sandy," he admitted at length. "Maybe you're right. Possibly it's only the dead lambs they're lifting, but I won't venture an opinion till I'm sure."

Donald was never able to prove definitely

THE QUIVER

that the eagles never took a living lamb, but he learnt definitely that if a lamb died the great birds of prey would fetch it within an hour.

Sandy, the stalker, had received instructions from the proprietor of that forest not to molest the eagles, and he had no quarrel with them, but one day he witnessed a thing which altered the whole aspect. He had often noticed that the wild red deer of the hill possessed an instinctive dread of the king of birds, and he had wondered why. He had seen deer bunch together in a state of agitation immediately they caught sight of an eagle flying low, and he concluded that this instinctive dread lived on in the adult deer from the memories of their fawn days, when the birds of prey might indeed have proved a source of danger to them. Now, however, a further explanation was forthcoming.

Sandy noticed a small parcel of hinds running over a ridge at great speed above the mist. They were all bunched together, and their curious behaviour at once arrested his attention. Then he saw that an eagle was following them closely, and as he watched the bird alighted on the back of one of the hinds. The terrified animal at once broke away from its companions and started down the almost vertical descent at breakneck speed. Evidently it was blind with terror, for next moment it threw itself headlong over a low cliff, to crash to its doom among the boulders fifty feet below. As it fell the eagle let loose its hold and went wheeling round, presently to close its wings and drop where the luckless hind had dropped.

Was this, indeed, what the bird of prey had aimed at? Sandy had no doubt, and forthwith he hurried to an adjacent bothie and obtained the loan of a shot-gun. With the mist in his favour he stalked to the edge of the cliff, and there, sure enough, was the eagle, standing on the dead deer, in the act of starting its ravenous meal.

Five minutes later Sandy stood, the wet mist driving down his swarthy face, looking at the great bird which lay outstretched at his feet. He raised one of the spreading wings. "The hen bird," he thought, having in mind the eyrie on Cairn o' Gree. "She must have been half starved, and she looks it."

That, indeed, was the first time the female eagle had left her chicks since they were hatched, driven from them, at length, by her need, and so she paid the price of her

hunger, which is the common price of hunger in the wilderness. But she had established a sad precedent, for the tale lost nothing as it sped from range to range, and stalkers who hitherto had never raised a hand against the royal birds, now regarded with suspicion the wildness of their hinds. But, had that spring been a normal spring, there would have been no Cairn o' Gree incident to be quoted against the eagles as an accepted habit of the kind—no conclusive proof that the mighty hunter of the air is a menace admittedly to fawns, for its destruction of adult deer was proven.

As a matter of fact, there was no creature in that range the eagles had need to fear, excepting man, of course; and man they feared because he no longer stands as Nature made him. He has gained unequal power by reason of shot and powder, and even man the Cairn o' Gree eagles feared but little.

One day, for example, a visiting sportsman was fishing the arm of the loch which runs far inland through the range, where a mountain torrent poured down over the crags into the brackish waters—fishing, I say, but in truth he was paying less attention to his sport than to the wonderful sunlight and cloud effect which surrounded him. Away to the west a burst of sunshine played on the snow-capped heights, and through the fissures of the clouds, rolling low above a choppy sea, the ladders of heaven streamed fantastically. Though midday the fireplay was darkly wonderful, and now and then a sea trout would leap from the blue, glistening like a bar of silver, to plunge and ricochet across the surface in a radiant display of energy.

Suddenly the angler heard a swish overhead, and in the fantastic light he saw what might have been a streak of golden fire descending. It struck the surface only forty feet from him, casting high a cloud of sparkling spray, and it was only later that he realized just what he had seen. He had seen a silver trout shoot skyward from the deep, but ere it broke the surface he heard the swish of wings above. Evidently the eagle had been watching, and he was midway down in his stoop ere the trout broke water. So he caught that silver, glistening bar in mid-leap—snatched it three feet from the surface in a mile-eating, headlong plunge. The angler himself was never to forget what he had seen, for as an example of stunt flying it was incredible; and as the eagle rose from the loch, at first flapping heavily

THE HERITORS OF THE HILL

ere it got into its glide, the bar of silver hung limply from its claws.

Thus the male eagle, feeding his chicks alone and unaided, had, indeed, to turn his hand to many trades. He himself could feed on almost anything, carrion included, but he preferred the freshly killed for his chicks. Even had his mate lived, his responsibilities would have been heavy enough, but now it was he who had to shield them from the storms which would have frozen them rigid in the eyrie, besides finding food for them and himself.

The angler who had seen the trout incident was an occasional contributor to the sporting press—that is, he wrote when he had anything special to write about—and one of his subsequent articles was headed, "Do Eagles Hunt by Night?" He knew nothing about the killing of the hen eagle, and so his opening passage read: "I have reason to believe they do. I was passing by the hill road from the loch, past the foot of Cairn o' Gree to the hotel at 10.45 p.m. It was quite clear and moonlight, though all day, as for several preceding days, a driving mist had shut everything from view. Suddenly I heard a loud swish overhead—a sound which I recognized instantly as the descent of an eagle, half stooping, half gliding. Looking up, I saw what might have been a human garment borne by the wind. It passed over, sweeping in a bee line for some wet and glistening crags on the slope eighty yards away. There I lost sight of it, but I heard instantly the piercing scream of a mountain hare, and a second or two later the 'zipp-zipp-zipp' of an eagle's wings as it rose. This was three hours after sunset, and, as I have intimated, the visibility by the light of the moon was a great deal better than it had been all day."

So we have good reason to think that the widower eagle put in no little overtime to meet his growing demands, but all the same one of his chicks perished. Sandy found it lying pulped at the foot of the crags—fallen from the eyrie, no doubt, though there was quite a likely chance that the other chick, feeling the pinch of short rations, kicked it out.

At length fair weather came, and Sandy, who lived across the glen from Cairn o' Gree, remarked to his wife: "You watch now it's turned clear! I bet you that eagle brings another mate along to help him feed the chicks."

But Sandy's wife had other things to do than watch eagles, and her circumstances in life did not encourage betting. Anyway, she told Sandy that mates were not so easy to find as his experience had led him to think, to which Sandy good-naturedly retorted, after due thought, "If he's got any sense he'll remain a bachelor and boss his own roost!"

Indeed the eagle did remain "a bachelor,"



"He caught that silver, glittering bar in mid-leap"

Drawn by
Warwick Reynolds

for his kind was not exactly superfluous even in that remote range, though the distances he covered were enormous. He seemed to have regular beats, for every four days or so the stalker in the Glen o' Weeping saw an eagle, which was not one of his native Black Mount eagles, systematically working down a certain corrie. That was fourteen miles from Cairn o' Gree, and again a keeper on the slopes of Ben Lawers saw a solitary bird working those slopes—forty-six miles from Cairn o' Gree. Again, when the north wind blew, this same wanderer might have been seen over the shores of Loch Awe, and even as far as Loch Lomond—wheeling and soaring over the flights of gulls which filled the

THE QUIVER



"Like a blob of molten gold he fell, to swish past the eyrie where his son was watching"

air like silver confetti, higher than the topmost gull, higher even than the buzzards which soared above the gulls.

Yet for all the distance he, the king of birds, was unmistakable—not only by the gliding majesty of his flight, which the great black-backed gulls closely rivalled, but by the golden sheen as he turned in the light, by the occasional narrowness of his circles, above all, by the upward tilt of his wing tips.



When Sandy heard the fisherman's story about the catching of the sea trout he shook his head incredulously and said, "Not the Cairn o' Gree eagles! Maybe a sea eagle from one of the is-

lands, but I never heard of a black eagle* taking fish."

"No?" replied the stranger indifferently. "And until a fortnight ago, Sandy, no one would have convinced you that a golden eagle will attack deer. Anyway, it was worth seeing."

Sandy did not argue the point, but a little farther on he said, "If you want to see some real flying keep your eyes on Cairn o' Gree any fine evening now. The old bird will be coaxing the chick to leave the nest."

So it was, indeed, that the male eagle, having very faithfully and ably fulfilled his duties single-handed, now began to think of launching his charge upon the infinite world. Alone he had fed his offspring, shielded it from the storms, and fulfilled those duties which his mate should have shouldered with him, and now, one cloudless evening, he hung in the wind opposite the eyrie. He hung motionless, his great planes set at an angle to the wind, and a listener in the glen might have heard for the first time the call note of the great birds of prey. So habitually silent were they that, from the day when the first new twig was laid until today, when the sole surviving chick was ready to leave the eyrie, no call note had been uttered in the region thereof. Few indeed are those who have heard the voice of a golden eagle, as it might have been heard that evening when the male bird hung beyond the eyrie—a thin, faint "kee." For fully a minute he hung, then slightly altering the angle of his planes, he rose, up, up, into the dazzling light, till even Cairn o' Gree was flattened out in the level map of sea and loch and range. Here and there, across that infinite expanse, were the white specks of the sunless heights, and the blue and green and brown of the tundra and the heather and the forest slopes. He could follow mighty rivers from their sources to the sea, and such human habitation as there was showed as the merest specks, scattered as from an empty pepper pot.

Then in midheaven the eagle closed his wings, and like a blob of molten gold he

* Occasional Highland name for Golden Eagle.

THE HERITORS OF THE HILL

fell, to swish past the eyrie where his son was watching, then to curve and sweep and glide. And his son at length spread his wide wings, which were his fortune, and boldly launched himself upon the world.



A few days later the two eagles parted, but one would have thought that by the ordinary course it was for the chick to go forth into the world to find his own range. Was it that his father said to him, "My son—undividedly my own—this is my range by right of heritage, and by that right I leave it now to you. It is the way of the eagles to mate for life, and here in the ancestral eyrie where you yourself were reared, may you rear your off-spring—many of them. Your father is growing old, but not so old that he wishes to remain alone. Therefore he is going to explore new hills, and maybe he will not return. And so—farewell! If you can't be good, my son, at any rate, be happy."

There are some who say that the eagle cannot die by the hand of time alone. Many years are given him, but when his hour comes age alone cannot strike the blow. Tradition tells us that he flies away to sea, following the sunset, even as the shadows close on his native range; some believe that his own kind beat him down, or that man or his wild foes must strike the inevitable blow. Time unaided cannot sound the final call, and this much would seem true, that when his springs are numbered there comes to the royal bird a desire to explore new lands, and so he leaves his native range. Perhaps that explains the old, old story that the eagle dies at sea.



One day that autumn a keeper in the

Hampshire coverts was much mystified by the strange conduct of his pheasants. In the woods all round they were flying from point to point and crowding on the fence tops, and as the man emerged into the beech avenue he saw an immense bird sweeping over the tree tops. Though he had never seen the like of it before, he knew it to be a bird of prey and the cause of the pheasants' unrest. From force of habit he threw up his gun, firing both barrels in quick succession. He saw the feathers fly, but the eagle wheeled and rose, up and up, till the merest speck in the heavens, then gliding easily, it turned towards the north.



Next day Sandy was on the hill when again he saw two eagles over the heights of Cairn o' Gree. So he concluded that the bird he had seen alone for several days had obtained a mate, for they were circling together in closest company. Then, as he watched, one of the two staggered in its flight and began to descend. Sandy thought at first that it was stooping at some living speck in the glen below, but as it fell the great wings opened and it began to spin. So headlong down, flashing as the sunbeams caught it, it struck the ground not far from where the stalker stood—struck and rebounded, and did not stir again.

Sandy went over and stood looking down at the dead creature. "Old age, I reckon," was his summing up, for he saw that the eagle was very, very old; then he remembered that a wild, free eagle cannot die by time alone. He raised one of the outspread wings, and on the crumpled feathers of the breast he saw a crimson stain. This, then, explained it, and as he stood there wondering he heard aloft a sound which he had never heard before—the thin-edged "kee" of a golden eagle.

A Friend's Birthday

By
Fay Inchfawn

This is the day
That your soul started on its earthly way.
I send you every golden wish I can;
Yes, all that is in tune with God's great plan,
All you can be, or do,
I wish for you.
I am so glad you came
Into this world of gold and grey;
So glad your soul's bright flame
Shone upon me—but gladder still to know
Your great heart's overflow
Will, to the very end,
Call me your friend.



Should Children Have So Many Toys?

By Judith Ann Silburn

IS the modern child over-indulged? His nursery is certainly, in many cases, a veritable exhibition of up-to-date mechanical toys, models, playthings, and constructive materials for building and designing every conceivable object. But, quite frankly, is he any the better for all this lavish gratification?

In reading biographies of great men and women, one cannot help being struck by the bare, uninteresting childhood many of them seem to have enjoyed. And yet, without perpetual instructive entertainment, they achieved greatness! "Yes," says someone, "but these men and women were exceptional, and they had genius to spur them on." True, but each one of us is a potential genius, and over-indulgence is a hindrance to its development. After all, necessity is the mother of invention.

One is not going so far as to say that *all* toys should be banished from the nursery, but merely that the modern child has too many. Present-day education, with its wonderful Kindergarten methods of teaching and its "play" lessons, supplies the child with unlimited ideas, which he endeavours to work out at home. Now, if he

is given a shop-made toy, or material which only needs sticking together (with even the gum supplied), many of his constructive instincts have no chance of being employed. In a word, he becomes mentally lazy, for he simply has to collect the pieces of his picture together and place them, without having the trouble of creating both the picture and material.

Children Prefer Their Own Toys

As a matter of fact, all children prefer the toys they have made with their own hands to the best one can buy for them. Watch a small girl-child with a battered, old rag doll that she has created out of mother's rag box. How much more personality Dinah has than the shop-made doll, with its French curls and waxen face.

Unfortunately, the modern child is deprived of much of the joys of home toy-making on account of the large number of ready-made toys at his disposal. And, incidentally, he is deprived of the chance of presenting things in his own way, since, as a rule, each box of bricks or set of tools usually contains a stereotyped pamphlet on "What to Make." All this is very handy

SHOULD CHILDREN HAVE SO MANY TOYS?

and useful, no doubt, but it tends to produce a certain sameness of ideas.

Play is the outward expression of the real child, and he should be persuaded to construct from natural resources. The love of discovery in a boy, as soon as he begins to take notice, should be fostered. He will take far more interest in a Robinson Crusoe Island he has constructed in the garden out of material he has found lying about than ever he will in a "Robinson Crusoe Set," complete with Man Friday and ready-made hut.

Creation and Destruction

All knowledge and progress proceed through destruction. Now, when a child is given a bought toy, he is naturally told to take care of it, and for that reason (if he is a good child) will try and do so, and thus does not always find out how it is made, which, in itself, would be an education. If, however, he creates something himself, a number of abortive attempts are first made before the article is finished, and he learns a great deal during the process.

There is an old saying that "familiarity breeds contempt," and in the case of

children who are, to a certain extent, dependent on novelty, this is especially true. If children are surrounded by toys, they will cease to be attracted by them. Also, the possession of too many toys interferes with their interest in school "educational" toys.

A Better Plan

A far better plan is to give the child odds and ends about the house: a box of scraps, empty photographic spools, reels, small chemists' jars and bottles, sample tins, and the enumerable waste trifles that accumulate in a home. Teach him to make things out of these resources. Help him in his play. Show him what *you* can do. Experiment. Above all, teach him to observe by showing him things about the house. Tell him how and of what they are made.

All children love nature talks and walks. A garden is always fresh. After the child has been for a walk or to a museum (and kiddies love museums), encourage him to reproduce something he has seen. This trains him to observe accurately.

Quite a number of quaint toys can be made out of a plateful of nuts and dried



A child's own creation

A ten-year-old's impression of Wembley, constructed out of odds and ends found about the home. Anaglypta oddments of wallpaper and corrugated chocolate box wrappings were used for the "palaces," and brass ornaments for "India."

THE QUIVER

fruits. A walnut makes a charming cradle, or a ship, with matches for the masts and a scrap of white lawn for the sails. Empty egg-shells are wonderful backgrounds for "funny faces," and corks are excellent for carving miniature houses and rustic cottages. These materials cost nil, and can be thrown away afterwards!

The Mothering Instinct

The mothering instinct in girl-children can be turned to useful account by allowing them to take part in a few of the simple duties of home-keeping. If a little girl be given a small set of brooms, for instance, she can sweep out the nursery. Laying the table and doing odd jobs should be encouraged, even if there are plenty of servants. Children who are constantly waited upon grow up indolent and lazy.

If there is a garden, let each child have a small plot, and take an interest in their produce! There are many gardening jobs which the children can take over besides cultivating their own gardens. All youngsters like to feel they are emulating father and mother, and are also quick to notice if their equipment is a mere "toy" tool! A toy-cupboard of useless playthings is a reflection on the parents' intelligence. Children do not appreciate silly toys; even quite toddlers will invariably choose some useful article (if they can) in preference to a Jack-in-the-box, and a visit to the nursery cupboard will generally reveal this fact. Washing tubs, boxes of oddments, and little tea-sets come out again and again to be played with, while Mr. Jack-in-the-box usually has only a day's or a week's popularity; and the reason is because the former provide a constant happy hunting ground for *new* ideas.

All children's playthings should be useful, and have for their aim sense and thought development. The child is at the mercy of his environment, so give him change when it is needed. And this applies to the decorative side of the nursery. As the child develops, so he will need a new background. Co-operate with him in his play. Enter into the spirit of "shopping" with some of mother's stores arranged in small tins on the nursery "counter." Encourage nursery entertainments, such as a small play, a "sale," a "lecture," or "nursery sports." The latter are most useful training for children, and help them later on in their school sports by giving them the right *esprit de corps*.

Helping the child to play instead of

leaving him to play alone keeps him from introspection—one of the most dangerous traits of early youth. The child who is kept active and attracted outwardly is never introspective. He hasn't time.

Sympathy is the keynote to a child's mind. A parent must never give the child the impression that his play is not worth taking an interest in, for children are sensitive little beings and quickly crushed. Play seriously with them. So many grown-ups have a habit of treating them to a half-teasing, half-condescending manner, which they fondly hope the children like, and then they wonder why they are not popular!

The grown-up who finds playing with kiddies irksome is one without imagination. There is nothing so wonderful as the children's world, and how much can be learnt from them not only in new thought but in truth! All that is beautiful springs from the child-mind. "Do you believe in fairies?" is only another way of saying: "Do you believe in ideals?" Children's stories all have happy endings because they believe in good, in forgiveness, and in the things that matter.

The moulding of character begins in the nursery, and children's games are the foundations for their future careers. But young people must have the right kind of play, otherwise good material is lost or dissipated. Unfortunately, modern toys are apt to make parents, as well as children, lazy.

Avoid Precocity

Though it is well for the child to be constantly given fresh "copy" for his mind development, at the same time excess will tend to produce precocity. There is an inclination on the part of present-day parents to over-stimulate children's minds. Youngsters to-day go to unlimited parties and entertainments, which must surely be bad for their nerves. While an occasional visit to a museum or pantomime is an excellent education, it is not good to crowd in too much excitement into a child's daily life. Impressions, to be any use, should be built up slowly. The parent of the small child who was heard to remark at a recent party that he was "sorry he could not stay very long, as he had to go on to two other parties the same night," ought not to be surprised later if her child develops into a nervous wreck.

Youth, glorious youth, let it last as long as it can. Play is the spirit of youth.



CHANGING ONE'S OCCUPATION

Burning to Write

PEOPLE are interesting. I have just been introduced to a young lady who feels that she has a vocation for writing; she has written several fairy tales, and would much like me to read them and tell her if she may hope to make a career out of literature. I glanced at her MS., and told her, in words which I have learnt off by heart with much repetition, that there is no particular market for fairy tales, and that to become a writer demands, besides a natural aptitude, a considerable degree of hard work. I have, too, had a visit from another young lady whose great ambition it is to be an artist, and thinks it must be perfectly thrilling to work in such an office as this. She, too, came armed with specimens of her work—dainty trifles of cupids and fairies. To her, too, I told the old, old story that artists, good artists, are in great demand and can obtain good commissions, but that it takes years and years of hard work to turn out even moderately acceptable work.

Trying Another Country

The other day I had a letter from a man in South Africa who wanted my advice as to throwing up a job there and starting with a small capital as an accountant in town. If there were no openings for accountants, could he earn a livelihood by running a chicken farm in the country?

A friend of mine has asked my advice about taking over a boarding-house at the seaside. She feels that there is a good deal of money to be made, and that it would be a good idea to enter that field.

Now, from my own personal knowledge, there are people—I meet them every day—

earning very fine incomes writing stories and articles. Artists, too—as I have said—are in great demand. There are hundreds of people earning money by rearing chickens and running boarding-houses. Money is also made on the Stock Exchange.

Yet, I am always discouraging people from making fortunes along these lines, and they say that I am a pessimist!

The Lure of the Chicken Farm

I have mentioned chicken farming: it is amazing the hold the chicken farm has on the imagination of people in search of "something different." Perhaps arithmetic is partly to blame for this. Get an incubator; buy two hundred eggs at sixpence apiece, and in due course, even if you only rear 50 per cent., you will have a hundred little chicks. These little chicks, in an incredibly short time, will be producing thousands of eggs which, sold at threepence apiece, will provide a nice little income. (Work out the figures and see what a fascinating prospect it is!)

On paper it is all so good and promising; in real life many are the pitfalls. The man who can make a living out of eggs is one with the knowledge gained through years of toil and disappointment, who unites infinite patience with infinite capacity for work. I say this with just a little experience of keeping fowls, observation of one man after another who has tried and failed, and a careful study of the weekly papers devoted to the business.

Making Money on the Stock Exchange

I know less about the Stock Exchange

THE QUIVER

than I know about chickens; therefore, I suppose, I am more hopeful! A stock-broker some years ago advised me to buy shares in a certain company at 29s. I did not take his advice. To-day they stand at £7! Now if only— It all seems so simple, yet I am told by people who are daily dealing in stocks and shares that even they, with all their experience, cannot make their fortunes in this way! But a contributor of mine, who really knows that mysterious institution, the Stock Exchange, is writing of its work in this number, and I must let his contribution speak for itself.



One Curious Feature

Chicken farming—the Stock Exchange—gold mining in some far-off land—authorship: how different they are, and yet what a lure they have had for people anxious to escape the hard drudgery and dull monotony of their lives, eager to change their calling and their fortunes.

Now one curious feature of the business is this: *it is generally the thing we know least about that seems to offer the greatest attraction.* The man dragging a pail of corn out to the chickens early on a winter's morning can see no rosy halo about chicken farming: if only he had a chance on the Stock Exchange. The harassed Stock Exchange clerk dreams of a ranch in South Africa; and the slave-of-all-work, wearily darning the children's stockings, envisages the paradise of a fountain pen and a typewriter, coupled with fame and an income from story-writing.

Alas, the idea runs through the whole creation: I am told that the very cows, munching their mid-day meal in the meadows, cannot resist the philosophy that the next field is always better than the one you are in at present!



No Short Cut

All this is apt to be a bit discouraging to the enterprising. It is not *meant* to be. I don't believe in people getting into a rut and sticking there. "General post" is good for us now and then. Get out of your rut; try something new by all means. But what I want to say is this: *there is no short cut to the good things of life.* By changing your occupation you are not going to alter the facts of life. By getting a new job you are not going to get a new creation. Sadly enough, whatever changes we make *we can-*

not escape ourselves. We take the old man with us, with all his weaknesses, peculiarities, propensities.

More than that: *we are not going to escape drudgery.* I have every sympathy with the budding author or artist, the young man or woman who feels he or she has a vocation in life. No one has the right to quench the mystical, wonderful aspiration of youth. It is good to dream dreams—especially impossible dreams, the sort that history tells us have become true. You, young man, with the dream of becoming an architect, you shall create something better than two-storied dwellings for smug suburban folk; you shall build immortal temples. You, young girl, with visions of fairy tales and short stories in the magazines; you shall create immortal works of fiction. You who long to see your illustration in a book, you shall print pictures on which the world shall gaze with awe.

It is all possible, all realizable. Don't ridicule your dreams, or smother your ambitions. Only realize what all good, great, and successful men have realized: that the secret of dreams-come-true is hard work.



Three Rules

Would you be a brilliant pianist? Here is what one of the most brilliant of music mistresses used to say, again and again, until her pupils knew it by heart and soul: "There are three rules to learn if you want to become a good pianist: the first is 'slow practice,' the second is 'slow practice,' and the third is 'slow practice.'" Hundreds of girls of the last generation passed their music examination with honours on the strength of this.

As a young writer, I was told that the secret of style was a careful study of good models—and incessant practice. Artists, I understand, have to study anatomy, and the secret of good drawing is incessant practice at drawing, say, a leg or an arm, which seems to embody the essence of drudgery and the antithesis of inspiration.

Inspiration! Ah, that is what we think we need. The call to great things. The young man feels that he has a divine mission to preach; the young woman feels that God is calling her to leave housework and go to the mission field. It is all so wonderful, so mystical, so soul-filling. . . . And so they set the young man to learn algebra and Latin verbs, and the young woman to scrub floors in a hospital.

BETWEEN OURSELVES

The Root of the Matter

So once more we get down to the root of the matter—whether it be the desire to earn an honest livelihood, the ambition for fame and fortune, the call to a high vocation: drudgery, sheer hard drudgery awaits us. If the real trouble with us—the conscious or unconscious motive at the back of our minds—is to escape monotony, drudgery, hard work—the way of fulfilment is not along the lines of ambition, vocation, change of occupation. We may as well stay where we are for that matter.

Get to the crux of the matter: drudgery only becomes such when we have no interest in what we are doing. A crowd of boys will sweep a gutter clean if they think sixpence has dropped into the mud; a girl will visit every drapery establishment in the town in order to match a ribbon for her hat; an artist will think nothing of hours spent on one study for his masterpiece. It is the interest that makes all the difference.



Full of Interest

And life, to the interested person, is full



From My Postbag

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I just made up my mind to-night to write you a few lines and try to express what I really think of your monthly magazine, *THE QUIVER*. How I always look forward to it as each month comes round, and just feel as if I could not live without it. I always make a point of reading it from beginning to end, so that there is no chance of my missing anything. The stories are always so very interesting, especially this new serial just begun. I'm positive every reader will like it. The articles are equally in the same line, if not better, as they very often appeal to oneself; and often one thinks they could stand being read over frequently, just to get the full meaning engraved into one's head. Of this, I refer mainly to Mr. Pringle and your own page.

I may say I have very little time for reading, but I never fail *THE QUIVER* whatever comes. I am a farmer's daughter in Lanarkshire, and where there is a farm there is always so much work to keep one busy. However, when one is happy and content in their work I always think it makes things go smoother, although certainly at times things will go wrong and it is really difficult to keep pleasant; but I find it is always best in the long run.

I am going to copy a piece of poetry

of interest. The home is a hall of mystery and romance to the young wife with pride of possession; typing in an office full of excitements to a girl bent on perfection of work and the attainment of speed; chicken farming is a fascinating study to the man who ignores drudgery in his interest in hens and eggs.

What a wonderful world it is, to be sure! How perfectly fascinating life is, work is, if we have the artist's eye, the artist's soul! Have you ever lain awake at night puzzling over the grouping of the shelves in the scullery, the hanging of the curtains in the hall, the turning of a dress, and the cutting of a child's frock? There are triumphs the world knows nothing about, interests the world cannot understand, strange glammers and inspirations round trivial things. But these are for the people who get below the surface, who catch hold with a firm grip.

Don't be afraid of drudgery: go straight ahead!

The Editor

I have which I value very much, and enclose it herewith.

A FAITHFUL READER.

Think Big

If you think you are beaten, you are,
If you think you dare not, you don't;
If you'd like to win, but you think you can't,

It's almost a cinch you won't.
If you think you'll lose, you've lost,
For in the world you find
Success begins with a fellow's will,
It's all in the state of the mind.

Full many a race is lost
Ere ever a step is run;
And many a coward fails
Ere ever his work's begun.
Think big, and your deeds will grow,
Think small, and you'll fall behind;
Think that you can, and you will,
It's all in the state of the mind.

If you think you're outclassed, you are,
You've got to think high to rise;
You've got to be sure of yourself before
You can ever win a prize.
Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or faster man,
But soon or late the man who wins
Is the fellow who thinks he can.



"The crochet lady's tone was gloomy.
'Bronchial, aren't you?' she said."

Drawn by
W. Lunt

Mrs. Muddiman Changes Her Mind

By
E. Brenda
Spender

"AND that," said old Mrs. Muddiman, a little pleased with herself for remembering the expression, "is that."

She put down her step-sister's letter on the spotless white cover of her dressing-table, settled her bonnet, both hands uplifted, on exactly the right few inches of her impeccable parting, and proceeded to tie the strings. Mrs. Muddiman's way of tying a bow was none of your hasty, crumpling, inexpressive practices, deserving to be called knotting rather than tying. A bow to Mrs. Muddiman was a work of art to be brought into being with careful smoothings and judicious foldings, and one or two final crisp

pulls between finger and thumb, which left it not just what it happened to be, but what you had intended to make it all along.

It was, moreover, symbolical of her outlook on life, her neat control of events, her faithful handling of opportunities. What she did, she did well, and she saw as far as in her lay that what others did they did well also.

Hers was the perfect competence which means success, and she had been successful all her sixty-six years, save in her marriage, and even there her conscience assured her that, granted the fact of a thriftless husband, somewhat addicted to drink, she had managed the situation extremely well. He had

MRS. MUDDIMAN CHANGES HER MIND

died young, too, and so had enabled her to go back to service and bring her daughter Emily up as perfectly as a daughter can be brought up who has to suffer the disadvantage of being with an aunt instead of a mother. And now even all that was well over. The Hon. Miss McCausland was dead and buried, both events—all arrangements for them being made by her faithful confidential maid, Amy Muddiman—had been as pleasantly carried through as possible, and here was the said Amy with a legacy of twenty pounds a year, and enough good clothes to last her life-time, comfortably settled in as honoured and everlasting guest in her daughter's married home, ready to go on seeing that things were done well for—and by—Emily and her husband and her baby for the rest of her days.

This is not, of course, to suggest that life promised perfection at once; there were alterations that old Mrs. Muddiman had quite determined to see effected which would make it a great deal more so. Hers was a nature which thrived on effort. An Emily who needed good advice on many of her household arrangements, a John who was sadly untidy, a baby boy who, about as perfect as a baby can be, yet trembled on the verge of being spoilt, offered an ideal field for her activities, exercise without exhaustion, as it were. Old Mrs. Muddiman looked round her room, disapproving but satisfied.

"I shall tell Emily about Aunt Lena's letter," she said to herself, neatly pinning the silk handkerchief round her throat with her everyday gold brooch. "The idea of it! Lena wants a cheap housekeeper, that's what she wants. Well, she won't get one."

It had needed that letter from a widowed half-sister ten years older than herself, offering her a home in return for her help, to put the last finishing touch to her satisfaction with things as they were. Lena lived in an incredibly gloomy tall house in Earl's Court, and let most of the rooms off to impecunious people who "did for" themselves. Lena was rheumatically and not too amiable, and, moreover, had never forgotten the rights of seniority, although time had long ago dwindled the difference between their ages to a very small matter. It would be endless work at Lena's with one thing and another, and no pay.

"No, thank you," said Mrs. Muddiman, easing on her coat and settling it on her shoulders with the neatest and most competent gestures, just such as she had used

for twenty years in bringing the Hon. Miss McCausland's coat and shoulders into due juxtaposition. There was almost artistry in her exquisite neatness, the deftness which gave every movement of her hands the desired effect.

Emily lived at St. Leonards, in a modern grey stone house on the hill, and her husband held a minor, but eminently respectable position at the town hall, which gave them a certain standing and pride, so that the place offered to them ever so much more than it did to people who just merely lived in it. Here Mrs. Muddiman was an honoured guest, and when she put her hand to anything it was seen and acknowledged to be a kindness, or an instructive exhibition of superior skill. Here she had the smart little spare room all to herself—at Lena's space was far too valuable for that—and already she had moved the bed into the only right corner for it, and was getting ready to persuade Emily to have oilcloth on the washstand, not merely lacey little mats which, though pretty, were unpractical.

"The idea," said Mrs. Muddiman, still ruminating on the letter, "'old folks ought to hang together, and let the young ones go their own way'—ought they? Well, all I can say is Lena never had a child, or she'd have known what a blessing a mother can be in a daughter's home. Emily will laugh."

She took a last look around her room, where not so much as a pin lay in its wrong place, smoothed an imaginary wrinkle from the quilt, and went downstairs. At the kitchen door she paused.

"Hilda," she said firmly to the little daily maid washing up in the scullery, "I'm going down to the sea-front to meet your mistress and baby, and then we shall come back to tea. See that you have it nicely laid. I shouldn't put those glasses into hot water if I were you . . . unless you like breaking things. Perhaps you do."

"No, ma'am . . . I mean yes, ma'am," replied the handmaiden, guiltily glad that her worst crime—the fact that she ought to have finished washing up long ago—seemed to be hidden behind the smaller one; and Mrs. Muddiman shut the front door, crisply satisfied that a word in season had been spoken for Emily's tumblers.

People in the street often looked at her as they passed, for she was so much the ideal old lady, with her rosy, cheerful face and her shining white hair and her neat black clothes, so exquisitely brushed and well put on, and more than

THE QUIVER

that because happiness and satisfaction radiated from her as she walked. She was not young or rich. She had spent most of her life in no more exalted position than that of confidential maid to a semi-invalid; but she had always had that consolation of character and inner satisfaction that wealth and royal blood could not have ensured. In some vague but convincing way she felt that her life, like a story, had come to a happy ending, that her legacy, her life with Emily and her grandchild, her lines cast in such pleasant places, were the reward of all the years in which she had—with what self-denial and striving she only knew—entirely done her best. She felt unconsciously that everyone who knew must be glad for her, and glad for themselves, seeing virtue so fittingly rewarded.

"I've come to the time of life when I can have my way a bit instead of other people's, and consider myself a little," she said. "And it's nice for Em, too, having her mother in the house."

Like most people whose punctuality is their pride, Mrs. Muddiman wasted a good deal of time in being too early; and Emily—I grieve to say it, but I suppose it was inherited by her from her black sheep of a father—like most of the nicest people, was generally struggling against a tendency to be late. Mrs. Muddiman reached the kiosk at which they were to meet, Emily having finished her shopping and her mother her afternoon nap, and found no Emily, no perambulator, no baby. She sat down with the happy, comfortable feeling of the person who is up to time strong on her, and smiled politely at the other occupant of the shelter, a tall, bony woman with a foolish hat, who was doing crochet work.

"A nice fine afternoon for the time of year," said Mrs. Muddiman with polite friendliness.

"It is, indeed." The other seized the opening with the awful eagerness of the utterly empty mind. "It will make the winter nice and short if this keeps on for a bit, won't it?"

"That's what I always say. The spring we have to put up with, but let's be as late as possible beginning winter." Mrs. Muddiman's tone suggested that only the extreme thoughtlessness of the rest of the populace had prevented these desirable things from coming to pass. "At my age you think twice about an east wind."

"Bronchial"—the crochet lady's tone was gloomy—"aren't you? Well, I am, but it's

supposed to be good for that here; so many old retired people settle down round here because of that—old Darbies and Joans."

Mrs. Muddiman chuckled to herself.

"And old Joans who haven't got Darbies."

"I'm always sorry for them, though, hanging around in the boarding-houses; it keeps them going, but what a life."

"My word, yes. But some lucky ones have daughters or sons to live with."

"Ah, well; but I don't hold with that. Old folks ought to hang together, and let the young ones live their own lives, I say."

"Do you?" Mrs. Muddiman smiled. This woman thought the same as Lena; but then, of course, Lena had fish of her own to fry, and naturally would think anything so helpful to her own plans. "Wouldn't you say that an only child might be all the better for having a mother in the home to give her a word of advice with the child and housekeeping and so on, and to be a bit of company? That is, of course, a woman with an income of her own for doctors' bills and holidays and so on."

The sallow lady pushed her crochet hook through her ball of strawberry-pink artificial silk, and clasped her hands around her knee, exceedingly pleased, for here was a conversation budding and branching out before her with ramifications of instance and anecdote that might carry it on only goodness knew how long.

"It does look like that on the surface of things," she conceded. "I don't know whether you're one of those that see under the surface; I am. And people confide in me, too; you'd be amazed. I was going to say that only to-day, strangely enough, I was hearing of just such a case as you were talking about, and it was just the other way. I don't know the people, but a friend of mine knows someone who knows them very well. The husband's something at the town hall."

"What do you say—something at the town hall?" Why, why had old Mrs. Muddiman's heart suddenly made such a noise that she couldn't believe her ears?

"A bit hard of hearing!" said the crocheting lady to herself, and moved nearer that the excellent, the lovely, the hopeful chance of conversation might be saved. "I was saying the husband is something at the town hall—these people I was telling you about. They've been married about a year—one child a couple of months old. The mother's been a widow a long time and had to work;

MRS. MUDDIMAN CHANGES HER MIND



"'I hope you won't feel hurt, Emily . . .
but I think I will,' said Mrs. Muddiman."

*Drawn by
W. Lunt*

I don't know what she did—housekeeping perhaps. The girl's never seen very much of her. Just when they were nicely settled down, husband and wife and baby, with the house all spick and span and everything going smooth, someone goes and leaves the mother a little money, and down she comes to make her home with them."

"And quite right, too," said Mrs. Muddiman firmly.

"I grant you on the surface, but what's

the real truth? She's got only a little money, and they have to keep her in food and all that, and the husband hasn't got much more than a moderate salary, and he's a saving young man; well, that's knocked on the head. The daughter's got her own ideas about housekeeping and babies and all that, and the old mother has got hers. She's a good girl, she's tried to take everything pleasantly; but there's her mother putting her right one side, and her husband angry

THE QUIVER

about it the other. And then the baby—she's all for the new ideas about babies, you know; she can't believe her old mother really knows best."

"She does—very likely!" said Mrs. Muddiman.

"I doubt it. . . . Besides, the worst of it is the feeling that she is there for ever; always a third whatever they want to do, and the spare room filled up year in and year out, and they were rather fond of each other—lovers still in a manner of speaking. The girl has her work cut out at keeping her husband sweet about it, I can tell you. Now, in my opinion that old woman ought to go into a home. She's one too many; but, bless you, she'll never see it. I don't know the name; it is a friend of a friend of mine knows them. And it wasn't that the wife said anything to her—she keeps herself to herself; but you couldn't help seeing the difference, my friend says, since the old mother has been there. They live somewhere up Sydney Road way; a nice part, isn't it?"

"I don't know," said Mrs. Muddiman. "I've never been there. I'm only a visitor. I expect I shall be leaving in a day or two."

She listened to her own tongue lying with such conviction, her truthful tongue that had never condescended to prevaricate in all its six and sixty years, and felt no compunction. The only thing she felt was the overwhelming importance of preventing the crocheting lady from ever guessing that she had told her story to the one person whom it most concerned. Ah! the crocheting lady must not see her with Emily and the baby; it might put her in the way of finding out. Mrs. Muddiman got up, and her knees shook under her a little. She steadied herself with a neat, black-gloved hand on the partition of the kiosk.

"I'm stiff with sitting," she said. "I must be getting on. I'll wish you good afternoon."

"Perhaps we'll meet again while you're here," the crocheting lady returned, looking at her as eagerly as a dog watching a rabbit hole.

"Perhaps we may," said Mrs. Muddiman vaguely.

She hurried up the front towards the shopping streets, as neat, as rosy, as silver shining as ever, only the satisfaction that had wrapped her round had gone, and even that was not to be noted by a casual observer. Even Emily, tired with shopping

and pushing a perambulator and hurrying, noticed nothing.

"Don't let's go along the front, dear," said her mother when they met. "It's cold, and the sea looks downright ugly to-day; it's quite got on my nerves. Let's turn up the next road and get away from it. Emily, I've had a letter from Aunt Lena."

"Have you, mother?"

"She wants me to go and live with her." She watched her daughter's face. "She'll find me in everything for the little bit of help I'll give her. She's had a lot of rheumatism."

"Of course, you're not going, mother?"

Good, loyal, affectionate Emily. She acted so well that it was almost a wonder that Mrs. Muddiman's satisfaction with things as they were did not return on the strength of that warm-voiced, eagerly protesting inquiry. But Mrs. Muddiman saw with a sinking heart, but saw clearly, for she was seeing for the first time in her life with the eyes of sympathy rather than self, a change in Emily's face that contradicted her words.

"I hope you won't feel hurt, Emily. . . . but I think I will. It isn't that I don't like being with you, my dear, and dear John and baby. I should like to come and have my holiday with you, and if you've ever got illness in the house—well, you've only got to send for me; you know that, dear."

"But—why—why—" said Emily.

"I don't like saying it, but I think old folks ought to hang together, and young folks, too—together. They shouldn't be mixed. I'm very comfortable now with you, but in a year or two—when baby gets to run about—I doubt whether I would have the patience I ought to, Emily. I'll be happier with your Aunt Lena, dear, and I hope you won't be hurt to hear me say it."

"Why, mother dear, it's the one thing I want . . . for you to be happy."

Oh, Emily! and already your pale cheeks have a little pink in them and your eyes are brighter, and you are planning how you can get John aside for a moment in the scullery while you pour the boiling water on the tea and pour the news—not good news, you won't say that, and he won't, just the news—into his ear directly he comes in.

"Well, then," said old Mrs. Muddiman stoutly, while dismay made her feel suddenly little and poor and old, "I'm off to London town next week. And that," said she, "is that."

The Stock Exchange and its Work

A Peep Behind the Scenes

By An Old Hand

A few months ago I printed an article describing life in the inner office of a bank. That article prompted this—a revelation concerning the, to most people, mysterious institution, the Stock Exchange.

YEARS ago a retired medical man, with nothing to occupy him, and a real fondness for poking about, was exploring the City and thought he would like to see where a certain narrow alley led him. It was an entrance to the Stock Exchange (left, for the moment, unguarded), and in the old gentleman went. It soon dawned upon him that he was in some place where he was not welcome: for, once on the floor of "the House," the young bloods danced round him, bawling their battle-cry "Fourteenhundred," and he was hustled out into the street with a very much battered silk hat and a torn coat! Thus does the Stock Exchange still playfully suggest to outsiders that they intrude, if their curiosity carries them into the sacred and exclusive precincts!

The Mystery of the Exchange

There is a sort of mystery about the Stock Exchange to the general reader, and he would be courageous (and possibly rather reckless as to truth) who said he understood all about it. I remember, when I entered my present employment in 1880, a wise-looking old member of the staff warning me that I should find the business "bristling with peculiarities," and it has been like that ever since, and fresh points are always cropping up.

There is, however, no need for mystery as to where "the House" is, and what is the general character of its daily work—an exacting routine which keeps thousands of people "on the go."

The Scene of Operations

The scene of operations is a building upon a fabulously valuable site, enclosed between Throgmorton Street, Threadneedle Street, and Bartholomew Lane, E.C. And

the purpose of those engaged inside it is the bringing together of the buyer and the seller of all manner of stocks and shares and public financial issues, who want each other's help, but who otherwise would never meet. Membership of this close corporation is divided between Brokers, who act for the public; and Jobbers, with whom they effect their friends' sales and purchases, and who are themselves prohibited from having direct dealings with the public. I always liken Jobbers to the wholesale traders in certain specified lines of goods; whilst Brokers are the retailers dealing for their own customers.

The intricacies of the business are baffling until one has experience and the key that is supplied by actual contact; and it is not so simple as the man in the street imagines, who says: "It's easy enough; you buy things when they are down, and sell them when they are up, and, of course, make money!"

"Come to Make Money"

I recall my old Chief's reply to a friend of his, who came in with the unwise remark: "I've come to make some money." "Now just think" (said the Head); "how do you fancy you're going to do that? You are a novice, you know, and you live right out of London—and would do nothing dishonourable—and you place yourself in competition with keen men, who are on the spot, who watch the markets like cats watching mice, and some of them not too scrupulous. They, in the main, fail; and how do you imagine you would do any better?"

A Broker is expected to know something and to advise about most of the hundreds of kinds of investments now dealt in, and his Clients' interests should be his own.

The Stock Exchange Committee exercises

THE QUIVER

very firm control over Jobbers and Brokers alike, in the event of a private individual having any grievance as regards a transaction affecting himself.

It is, of course, of vital importance for the Broker to know well for whom he is acting, and introductions are carefully verified, or should be. It follows that the personal relation so often existing between Client and Broker is confidential, and similar to that between important people and their "family lawyer."

I have sometimes been asked what *Speculation* is, and I know how inadequate definitions may be. I have replied: "Buying what you can't pay for, and selling what you haven't got." I claim, however, no real acquaintance with speculative business.

Intricate Operations

One could go on writing pages about the technicalities of Stockbroking, and even try to make clear terms like "carryover," "boom," "cover," and "Bank-rate"; one could dilate upon the graduated varieties of Issues that companies may have: Debentures, Guaranteed Stocks, Preferences, Ordinary and Deferred, and upon the many ways of transferring them, but it would be voted "dry" by the general reader; nor is this the place for describing the "making of prices," or the different conditions that affect the adjustment of values—puzzling enough, often, to those having daily touch with such matters.

The ordinary individual can, perhaps, realize that there is a process by which his own deal (very important to him, of course) forms a part of the enormous bulk of property passing from one owner to another—through the channel of Broker, Jobber, and Broker again: for the wide area over which the profession works narrows itself down to the personal unit.

It is this separate relation that makes Stockbroking so varied, and often fills business with welcome glimpses of the funny side of things. It brings one, also, into contact with quite a number of interesting people.

The Broker may, of course, pick and choose amongst those who want him to do business for them, and my own firm once requested a man to take his investments elsewhere on very odd grounds. They were uneasy because, being a commercial traveller, he wrote and wired from different towns. They told him that a commercial

traveller had no *locus standi*, and dropped him accordingly.

Queer People Indeed

Some of one's Clients are very queer people indeed: cranks, millionaires who dress (and behave) shabbily, furtive and suspicious folks.

One dirty old man—a London property-owner—used to bring to the office paper money, piles of sovereigns, and greasy cheques from his tenants, that he had hoarded, and he invested the lot in the Funds. One day he transferred £700 stock each, as a surprise gift to his four daughters; and when he died, we realized all his investments, and, as the brothers and sisters were not on friendly terms, a meeting of them had to be arranged, and we provided bank notes to go equally round the jealous circle.

It is, I suppose, a usual thing for the Stockbroker to have a large clientele amongst ladies, and to find the necessity for dealing with some of them very carefully.

A poorly-dressed person almost sneaked into our office once, and a young partner, new to the work and nervous, received her. He couldn't make her out, and thought she looked as if she wanted to borrow half a crown!

I told him we had never seen her before, but she claimed to be sister to some well-off people in our connexion, and I thought it would be all right. He took her on, and, before she left, she had laid out—unpromising as was her appearance—about £40,000 in selected securities.

In Trouble

We had a caller one day who seemed to be in trouble. She was most anxious to raise money, and handed over five or six Stock Certificates of purchases we had made in her name. She wanted the whole of the proceeds there and then. It was explained that the sales would be completed in about a fortnight; but the lady said she must have the amount at once, and seemed suspicious of delay. We pointed out that, to get the business through, out of regular course, would involve trouble to us, and loss to her in the matter of prices; but it was done, and she left with our cheque. Later in the day a neighbouring member of the Exchange came in—confidentially—and showed my firm the cheque just signed in the lady's favour. She had told him to lay out the

THE STOCK EXCHANGE AND ITS WORK

money for her, and he wondered what it all meant!

The poor lady was evidently troubled lest her investments had become valueless; was reassured to see the money, and, of course, paid rather dearly for the relief of mind, because she lost a good deal in the value of the securities hastily sold, and was charged commissions by us for selling and by someone else for buying on the same day!

I had amusing interviews, years ago, with an aggressive elderly woman, a butcher, who would never entrust to me her cash until she had asked—in a tragic whisper—if the senior member of my firm was a strictly honourable man. She always wanted to know if we had done business for her sister lately—giving a name we didn't know; and I always thought her sister was a myth until, later on, the son of the old lady told me that of his aunt's estate, which we had had nothing to do with, his share came out at £8,000. The aunt had been, evidently, a reality!

"Pottering" Clients

The large customers—whose transactions are "worth while"—as a rule, give the least trouble; and the "pottering" clients are the despair of a Broker's staff. We once asked a "small" investor to spare us her purchases (£20 a time or so), and she had her revenge! She went to the bank in her country town, for which we acted, and sent her fiddling orders officially. She, thereby, got her wishes carried out (as a lady would), and the poor Broker profited less from each bargain than he had formerly done, for the bank, naturally, took a share of the commission!

Besides the "clients coming direct," there are two sources of business for Stock-brokers, very profitable, but quite trying at times, in different ways. The great banks patronize us; and, from our long knowledge of them, I, and those associated with me, are driven sometimes to saying unkind things about bank managers!

And the solicitors come to us, too; their advent means circumlocution, delay, and a good deal of bother caused (without their meaning it) through sheer inaccuracy. Between these two big sources of business, however, we rub along; and our sense of humour often keeps the wheels lubricated!

"Busy Days"!

One day a country clergyman, whom I

had seen much astonished by the people tearing about in Capel Court—mostly hatless—came up to me and said, with quite a professional inflexion of voice: "I suppose some days are busier than others!" This remark struck me as both comic and unanswerable, and has suggested to me a few thoughts on the everyday work of the Broker.

The parson's statement was superficial and obvious; but, though offered in all simplicity, it summarized my experience of very many years. Though each day is unlike all others—for variety is a feature of the work—most days are similar, in being full and in being days of pressure, where duties of the most important sort have to be got through accurately, against time. This state of things often means restricted lunch-time and long hours in the City. Naturally, no stockbroker, when he arrives at his table in a morning, can tell what will be claiming his attention. If he could foresee things—prices, for example—he wouldn't need to go to business for long! He has no means of telling what a day may bring forth, neither can he say who may arrive on the scene.

The Broker's Day

In a general way, he can rely upon being busy—and on there being a sort of certainty that he won't starve. One firm I know relies upon putting into its revenues £100 per day from the orders that the post brings from the branches of a certain bank. Anything beyond—and that is often a good deal—is "to the good," so to speak; and the day will be well and profitably filled up in grappling with everything as it arises. The Broker, settled in his office-chair, is faced with piles of letters to consider, involving perhaps, to start with, only a few dozen humdrum transactions in the "House." In many cases his clients want advice about concerns of which he knows little but the name; and then, during the day, callers look in, and they don't all do sufficient business to justify the time they take up. I have been thinking of several things that would surprise an outsider if he were at a Broker's elbow for a day.

1. He would realize the frequency with which the unexpected happens.

2. He would be amazed at the calmness with which dealings—that would be without precedent for size in some businesses—are effected.

3. And he would be shocked by the ap-

THE QUIVER

parent recklessness in the handling of valuables and in paying money away all day long!

Apropos of this last point, a Solicitor, sitting with his Broker when he was being interrupted by a procession of clerks bringing in cheques for signature, could not restrain the question: "My dear sir, what are you doing? Surely you don't part with money without seeing for yourself that it is all right to do so?" How horrified would he have been if he could have seen the amounts involved in total!

The Unexpected

Things have been greatly quickened up of late years, especially by the telephone, and the old leisurely methods of forty years ago are over. This accounts often for the daily happenings of the unexpected. Perhaps a Broker has devoted time to formulating an elaborate scheme for the re-arrangement of a large fund for some lawyers, and forgotten all about it. One day, weeks after, there comes a ring: "With reference to your letter, the trustees have agreed to sell all the stocks in the list we sent you, and to divide the proceeds equally between the ten securities recommended by you. Please send us contract." So you get busy—all in a minute. Or, another telephone call tells you to buy £150,000 Conversion Stock for the head office of a bank or for an insurance company; and this sort of work all Brokers like—even if it does arrive suddenly when they are "up to the eyes" with smaller matters! What they really like best is a client of few words, who is economical of time, and who knows his own mind.

The transactions of such people are often large and easy to carry out. But they have to be very civil to smaller fry, who generally want their purchases and sales done on impossibly favourable terms, and whose stay in the Broker's room is out of proportion to the size of the "deals" to be effected. A Broker often wishes he could

charge for advice and interviews—especially in cases where his suggestions are accepted and the business is taken elsewhere!

I remember once an old-world cleric coming in. He said he had had to promise a stained-glass window for his church, and must get the £600 to pay for it! What did we advise him to buy in order to make the requisite profit very quickly? This kind of surprise is, I admit, unusual; but many others happen day by day. Every purchase or sale—and there may be scores of them in a day—necessitates negotiation in the Stock Exchange; it involves also many entries, and different sorts of documents at various stages. It will therefore be seen, even by those unfamiliar with the very exacting routine of a Stock-broker's life, that it isn't always simple.

Complicated Book-keeping

The book-keeping resulting from one day's activities alone is complicated; the volume of correspondence—for which the Broker can make no charge to his clients—is immense, and cannot be got through without much skill and experience; and, altogether, the Broker does a good deal to earn the fixed rates of Commission that his Committee of Management permits him to charge!

The profession certainly attracts, in spite of the strain involved—possibly because of the severe demands made on one. But a young fellow, ambitious of entering it, had better bring with him, besides any general educational advantages he possesses, many non-academic qualifications, of which I mention a few: Love of hard work, a quick grasp of matters, a reliable memory, sound health, lots of patience and complete command of temper, agreeable manners, the instinct of punctuality, readiness in dealing with figures, and the highest character.

And, let him enrol himself as a permanent student in the "study of human nature" class of the University of Common Sense!



PRACTICAL HOME-MAKING

Comforts for the Sick-Room

By Agnes M. Miall

ILLNESS unfortunately visits every household from time to time, more especially during the winter: but it is usually of so temporary a nature that it seems unnecessary to invest in expensive sick-room appliances, and so the patient has to make shift more than is very comfortable.

This, however, is a waste of temper and energy all round. Convenient arrangements lessen work for the home nurse and help the invalid to recover and return to work as speedily as possible; and actually substitutes for most sick-room appliances can be very quickly improvised at home. The cost is nil or trifling, because everything necessary is such as is found in the average household; and as the comforts consist rather of an ingenious new use for old things than of the buying of new, they involve no elaborate construction. They can be put together in a few minutes and as easily be restored to their proper use when the illness is over.

A Bed-rest—in Two Minutes!

Few temporary invalids are too ill to sit up in bed for meals and at least part of the day. Here the hospital bed-rest, which can be adjusted at any angle to support the patient's back and head, proves invaluable, but an expensive appliance like this can seldom be afforded except for a long or chronic case of illness. A good "second-best" can luckily be extemporized in two minutes.

Remove bolster and pillows from the bed. Turn upside down a small chair, preferably a

wooden one from the kitchen, and place it reversed in this way at the head of the bed, so that the front edge of the seat and the top rail of the back rest on the mattress, with the front legs of the chair thrust through the head rails of the bed. This sounds complicated, but is actually extremely simple, as Fig. 1 clearly shows. Pad the long slope formed by the back and back legs of the chair with pillows to suit the patient.

The angle of the rest with the bed may be altered to suit individual requirements by thicker or thinner padding, or by placing one or more cushions under the front seat edge of the chair. The best chair to use for the purpose is one without rails from leg to leg under the seat, or with these rails as

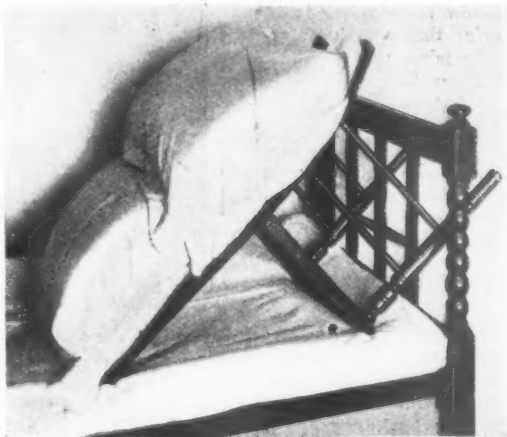


Fig. 1.—An extremely simple way of making up a temporary bed-rest

THE QUIVER

close to the seat and as far from the ground as possible.

A Bed-table

A bed-table which will support trays of food, writing materials, etc., almost as well as the genuine costly article can be improvised from an ordinary packing-case not

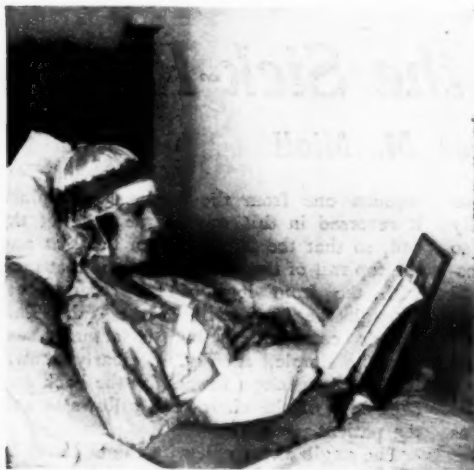


Fig. 2.—A picture frame placed on a pillow makes an excellent book-rest

less than 18 to 20 inches long. Simply remove the bottom and one long side from the box—the work of a few minutes. The three sides that remain form an admirable table, the long side making the top, the two short ones the legs, which can be placed astride the invalid's knees. The wood should be well sandpapered before use, to avoid any risk of splinters entering the hands.

A Makeshift Book-rest

Reading in bed or before first getting up* is generally rendered a very doubtful pleasure by the fatigue (considerable to a sick person) of holding up the book unsupported. To avoid this and the strain to the eyes several makeshift book-rests can easily be put together for sick-room use.

Fig. 2 shows the simplest of all, suitable for magazines and light volumes. A pillow is placed over the knees of the patient propped up in bed, and on this stands a large and fairly heavy picture frame, with its strut fully extended, as a prop to take the weight of the book.

A More Elaborate Rest

More elaborate but more comfortable is the book-rest shown in Fig. 3. An ordinary enamelled tray with raised edge, string and two pieces of thick wood, such as nosing, go to its making. The pieces of wood are nailed together in the form of the letter H, the cross-bar being just a fraction more than the length of the tray. A rather slack string is tied firmly from the top of one upright to the top of the other.

Have a pillow across the patient's knees, as before. Place the H upright on this, using the string as a support which will keep the tray at a suitable slant for acting as a book-rest. The raised edge of the tray will effectually prevent the book from slipping.

Once the patient is sitting up in her room, a tall piece of furniture, such as a stand or the back of an armchair, can support the home-made book-rest



Fig. 3.—An enamel tray and a wooden support form another kind of book-rest

and relieve her entirely of its weight. A flat piece of wood of suitable size or a small tray can be lashed with string at right angles to the piece of furniture chosen, about 2 feet 6 inches from the ground. The

COMFORTS FOR THE SICK-ROOM



Fig 4.—Very useful for the patient who is sitting up in her room

wood or tray forms a shelf for the bottom edges of the book, its upper part resting against the furniture to which the shelf is tied (Fig. 4).

A Leg-rest

In cases of severe gout, a broken limb or other injuries which necessitate the leg being kept stretched out off



Fig. 5.—An efficient leg-rest can be contrived from a folding card-table and a few cushions

the ground, an efficient leg-rest can be contrived in a few minutes from a folding card-table, such as every household possesses, and a few cushions.

Keeping the table folded flat, stretch it at an angle from the front seat of a suitable-sized arm-chair to a thick cushion laid on the floor two or three feet in front of it (Fig. 5). The folded legs of the table will rest just inside each arm of the chair, the patient's thighs reposing between the table legs. The slope should be padded to any angle that is comfortable with more cushions, or an extra one may be placed under the table on the floor if a more horizontal position is necessary.

If a child requires a leg-rest, a smaller one can be made by



Fig. 6.—A sensible makeshift leg-rest for a child

using a low arm-chair with a rail under the seat and hooking on to this, by one of its handles, a large wooden tray. The other handle of the tray rests on a cushion on the floor, and this variety of rest has the advantage that no restless youthful movement will shift the hooked tray off the rail. Such a leg-rest gives ample length for any child up to ten or eleven years old (Fig. 6).

The Cold Feet Problem

During the days in bed hot-water bottles successfully solve the problem of chilly feet, but the invalid sitting up for the first day or two is very susceptible to cold after the cosiness of bed. Even a fire may not be enough to keep the extremities warm when the diet is low and no exercise is being

THE QUIVER

taken, and a foot-warmer improvised at home will prove a great blessing.

To make it, take any spare cushion cover that is available — preferably



Fig. 7.—A foot-warmer improvised at next to no cost

one of warm and unspoilable (or easily washable) material. With a yard of

black cotton-wool, a thick woollen scarf, or an old fur-lining pad the inside of the cover thickly. This can be done with big, rough stitches, taking only a few minutes. Put a hot-water bottle at the bottom of the case, then draw it well over the invalid's feet and ankles, so that her soles rest on the bottle (Fig. 7). (It should have a flannel cover, or she should wear woollen stockings, of course.) If the bottle is refilled two or three times during the day the patient will always be comfortably warm.

Extra Comfort from Pillows

Apart from even the simplest improvisations, pillows *au naturel*, as it were, can be specially arranged to give extra comfort. For an invalid who is reclining or sitting up in bed and always inclined to slip downwards, roll a pillow or bolster lengthwise in a spare sheet, twisting the ends of the sheet tightly. Lay this across the bed where it will come under the knees and tuck the twisted ends firmly under the mattress each side. This prop will stay in position all day and quite prevent that uncomfortable slipping.

The Popular Vegetable Dinner

By Jessie A. Knox

TIME was, not very long ago, when most people thought that a meal without meat could not be satisfying, and such a meal was considered only fit for food-faddists or the so-called "new-fangled vegetarians." Food education by word of mouth and through the Press has greatly modified this point of view, and now the vegetable dinner is as carefully planned as one containing an elaborate meat course. Many hotels and restaurants make a special feature of their vegetable dinners, as they have found them both profitable and popular.

As a nation we were not eating enough vegetables. It is very easy for us all to get into certain ruts where our food habits are concerned—we like this and we don't like that, and it's hard to make us change. Meat has for years and years been considered *the* main dish of a meal, and no meal was possible without it. We did not

know how to cook vegetables well, with the exception of potatoes, so we fell back on what we *could* do and let the rest go. Vitamines were not known, and if we felt tired or "dragged out" we took cod liver oil as a tonic and accepted our fatigue as part of the day's work.

The Value of Vegetables

Then science stepped in and began to talk about the high nutritive value of vegetables and the place they should have in the diet. Along came the war with its "meatless" days, and people began to find substitutes for the proscribed meat and to learn more how to use vegetables. "Grow more vegetables" was a war-time slogan—and that meant "eat more vegetables." Domestic scientists and nutrition experts supplied tables showing their food value and told how to prepare them to provide the most nourishment. Vegetable dinners

THE POPULAR VEGETABLE DINNER

had gained a foothold. And then they leaped ahead by their own worth. To-day it is unusual to pick up a bill of fare that does not mention a "special vegetable dinner."

A balanced or well-planned dietary should not only contain the proper food elements—fats, proteins, carbohydrates, minerals, and vitamins—but must also be satisfying. To attain this, it must possess some "rib-sticking" material—in other words bulk or cellulose. Vegetables, as a class, are made up largely of water, but they also contain considerable quantities of this cellulose or indigestible fibre, and all of them are considered excellent sources of the vitamins and minerals that are so indispensable to body growth and development. Some vegetables, notably peas, beans, and lentils, are high in protein content, while others such as potatoes, beets, and corn are higher in carbohydrate or starch content. All vegetables admit of so much variation in preparation and combine so easily and appetizingly with eggs and milk that they lend themselves very readily to the making of a well-balanced, fully satisfying meal. Care must be taken in planning a vegetable dinner to so combine vegetables that this balance is maintained.

Colour combination and contrasting textures and flavours are almost more important in a meal of this type than where meat is concerned. Colour should harmonize, some hard or crisp substance must be provided to offset a soft one, and flavours should blend so as to form an agreeable whole.

A large variety of vegetable dinners are possible in the summer and early autumn months, when fresh vegetables of all kinds are so abundant. And by judicious planning, excellent menus may be evolved from tinned foods alone, or from a combination of tinned and fresh foods throughout the year.

One of the most popular vegetable dinners for the autumn uses curried stuffed tomatoes as a main dish, serving with them buttered string beans, crisp white celery, spinach salad garnished with grated raw carrot, and a luscious peach shortcake. This menu follows the rules laid down for providing proper nutritive elements, good colour combinations, and varieties in texture and flavour. If curry is not liked, it may be omitted and to take its place an onion or savory vegetable sauce served with the tomatoes.

Some Menus

Curried Stuffed Tomatoes: Select six large, firm, ripe tomatoes. Cut a slice from the top of each and scoop out the inside with a spoon. Chop or cut the pulp, and put it in a saucepan with a small onion, a teaspoon of salt, a small piece of bayleaf, and one-half cup of water. Cover and simmer for twenty minutes. Melt three tablespoons of butter, add three tablespoons of flour, and one teaspoon of curry powder. When well blended, add one teaspoon of minced onion and one cup of the stewed tomatoes. Save the rest for sauce. Cook until thickened, then add two cups of cooked rice (either hot or cold), one-third cup of bread crumbs, and one beaten egg. Stuff the tomatoes with the mixture, rounding it up well. Place close together in a greased baking dish, strain the rest of the stewed tomato pulp around them, and bake in a moderate oven—350 degrees—for thirty-five minutes, or until tender and browned.

Spinach Salad: Chop very fine three cups of cooked spinach or swiss chard. Season with two tablespoons of melted butter or salad oil, salt and pepper, and one tablespoon of vinegar. Pack into six small cups and chill. Turn out on crisp lettuce and sprinkle thickly with shredded or grated raw carrots. Garnish with a spoonful of mayonnaise, and serve with cheese straws or crisp crackers.

Peach Shortcake: Mix together three cups of pastry flour, four teaspoons of baking powder, one-fourth cup of sugar, and one-half teaspoon of salt. Rub in two-thirds cup of shortening, and then add one beaten egg and enough milk to make a very soft dough—it will take about one cup. Spread with a spoon into two well-greased, layer-cake pans, and bake in a hot oven—400 degrees—for fifteen minutes. Remove from the oven and cool slightly. Peel and slice enough peaches to make one quart after slicing. Sprinkle lightly with sugar, and put the two layers of shortcake together with a thick layer of peaches between and on top. Serve with liberal amounts of plain, slightly sweetened cream, evaporated milk, or a thin custard sauce.

Menu 2

Another very appetizing vegetable combination is made by combining lima beans, corn and tomatoes into a thick stew, or baking it as a casserole dish. Serve with it large baked potatoes or boiled noodles—the potatoes give a better contrast in tex-

THE QUIVER

ture; bran or wholewheat muffins; a salad of crisp sliced cucumbers and celery, and a fresh plum pie. A cream of mushroom or Russian beet soup may be served as a first course if a more elaborate meal is desired.

Casserole of Lima Beans, Corn and Tomatoes: Shell enough small lima beans to give two cups, add boiling water to just cover, and boil for fifteen minutes, then add eight medium-sized tomatoes that have been scalded, peeled, and cut in pieces, one teaspoon of minced onion, four tablespoons of butter, three cups of cooked corn cut from the cob, salt and pepper to season, and three tablespoons of dry bread crumbs. Cook slowly for five minutes, then pour into a greased casserole dish, cover and bake in a very moderate oven—325 degrees—for forty to fifty minutes. Serve with baked potatoes or boiled noodles. Tinned vegetables may be used instead of fresh, substituting one tin of baby lima beans, a medium-sized tin or two cups of tomatoes, and a tin or two cups of corn. The mixture may be entirely cooked on top of the stove instead of in the oven, allowing forty minutes of very slow cooking.

Fresh Plum Pie: Use large red or blue plums. Wash and cut in half about two dozen ripe plums. Remove the pits and sprinkle the fruit with from one-half to one cup of sugar—according to sweetness of the plums. Line a deep pie plate with good pie dough and fill with the halved, sugared, plums, packing them in closely. Cover with a top crust, pinching the edge closely together, and cut two or three slits in the crust, or prick in several places with a fork. Bake in a hot oven—425 degrees—for fifteen minutes, then reduce the heat to moderate or 350 degrees, and cook twenty-five minutes longer. Serve warm or cold.

Menu 3

Stuffed baked cucumbers with parsley sauce form the main dish in a third satisfying and appetizing dinner menu. Boiled corn on the cob; boiled beets with a sour sauce; French fried potatoes; a salad of romain, sliced tomatoes and shredded green pepper, and a gelatine fruit dessert supply the other food elements and make a well-balanced meal.

Baked Stuffed Cucumbers.—In the autumn, the large, partly ripened cucumbers are abundant and cheap. They are rather large to use raw, but cooked they are delicious. Select six rather large cucumbers, and after washing them, cut a slice lengthwise from the top of each. Peel these slices and chop them fine. Scoop out the pulp and seeds with a spoon or a knife and chop the pulp, discarding the seeds. Peel the cucumber shells. Mix the chopped pulp with two cups of soft bread crumbs, one beaten egg, one and one-half teaspoons of salt, pepper to season, one tablespoon of minced onion, and six mushrooms chopped fine. Mix thoroughly and use to stuff the cucumber shells, rounding up the mixture. Dot each with a teaspoon of butter and place close together in a greased baking dish. Dissolve one teaspoon of vegetable extract or a bouillon cube in one cup of hot water, and pour into the baking dish. Bake in a moderate oven—350 degrees—for forty-five minutes, basting several times with the liquid in the pan. Serve hot with parsley sauce. For the sauce melt two tablespoons of butter, add two table-spoons of flour. Pour off any liquid left in the baking pan and add milk to make one and one-half cups. Stir into the flour and butter mixture and cook until thickened and smooth. Add salt and pepper to season, and just before serving stir in one-fourth cup finely chopped parsley.

Behind the Scenes at the Zoo

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Things that Matter

by Rev. ARTHUR PRINGLE

DIMINISHING THE ORDINARY

WE all have our distinctive quarrel with life: it has denied us this boon or overweighted us with that handicap, or cheated us of ambitions worthily cherished and honestly worked for. So we run on with our varied indictment of the fates, and it calls up a curious picture of the mingling of resentment and expectancy with which human nature faces its destiny.

But, in the midst of every variety of temperament and circumstance, there is one grievance that nearly all people of spirit hold in common, one complaint that springs to all lips that have learnt the language of courage and enterprise, viz., *the ordinariness of life*. It is this that is most hard to bear and most difficult to forgive. Let life shape itself to us as a provocation or an enemy, and we can meet it, getting exhilaration, or even victory, out of the struggle. But if it stands before us inanimate as a statue, doing nothing, saying nothing, suggesting nothing, what is the use of it, where are we to look for stir or inspiration?

Challenging Life

To all intents and purposes, this is what life meant until comparatively recently to the majority of people. They challenged it, pricked it, cajoled it, lashed it by turns; but nothing happened. For, in the worst paralysing sense, "nothing happens" when everything goes on happening just as usual, day after day, week after week. And that is what we rebel against. We are so made that we can stand up to most things, but the insipid is too much for us. Give us movement, drama, challenge, and we wake, draw out our reserves, and make a fight for it. But tell us to sit down unexpectedly, or put us where no adventure is ever likely to come, and the spirit goes out of us, and we feel more and more that things are not worth while.

Our lives, when you come to think of it, are like the pool of Bethesda. So long as it remains quiet and unstirred, the pool has

no healing virtue. It must be "troubled" before anything can happen. And such is life. It creates its great moments and offers its great opportunities when it moves and shakes and suggests all kinds of unlooked-for happenings.

Now the point is, how are we to encourage life to come to us in this way—to throw off the garb of the commonplace and clothe itself with fresh and arresting promise? A great deal must, of course, depend on ourselves. If we let our eyes become tired with satiety and allow the familiar to become synonymous with the cheap, there is little more to be said. We shall have asked tameness and insipidity to be our rulers, and they will quickly reduce us to submission.

Keep Awake

A big part of the art of life—and surely Christ is constantly suggesting it—is to *keep awake*, to be on the look out for hidden treasures and unsuspected meanings. What He said to His first disciples He says to all: "Watch!" Life sinks into platitude, eludes and cheats, unless we do all in our power to *keep ourselves alive*. With what measure we mete it is measured to us again: life to the living, death to the dead, nothingness to the unexpectant and unresponsive—that is the way things work. Which is to say that this question of making life worth while is largely in our own hands. Having eyes, we must see; having ears, we must hear. We must somehow escape the tragic irony of being dead while we live.

Strange that, to-day of all days, so many people should stand in need of this reminder. The appliances and accessories of life are more numerous than ever, and there is much bustle and distraction that can so easily be mistaken for the real thing. Nevertheless, it is not the real thing. Nearer to it is the quiet simplicity of soul that takes nothing for granted and allows

THE QUIVER

nothing to become quite commonplace; the childlike spirit that wonders and expects and grows healthily excited because it believes that life is really *alive*.

Like most other things that are worth doing, this is easier said than done. But, as I have already hinted, it is not so hard as it was a few years ago. More and more are we now realizing what it means to be in the aftermath of war on the colossal scale. "Deferred shell shock" is a phrase the doctors are falling back on to describe all kinds of collapse and suffering; and, no doubt, we are paying, and shall long continue to pay, for that awful drain on nerve and stamina.

Compensations

Yet there are compensations; and one of the biggest is that the war and its sequels have stripped life of the cheap commonplace robbing that, in the eyes of so many, it had come to wear. Long centuries ago, at a time of national crisis, the prophet Ezekiel spoke this word of the Lord to the people: "I have diminished thine ordinary. . . ." Our English translation adds "food"; but the hiatus is more faithful to the original, and says more than any words could. For when great testing times come, to the nation or to the individual, here is their first and paramount effect—the diminishing of the ordinary. Life may have put a bigger emphasis on suffering and calamity, but at least it has begun to stir and to mean something. No longer a stagnant pool, it is a far-reaching, raging sea—dangerous but bracing.

Any Taste in the White of an Egg?

Taking us in the bulk and in our normal healthy mood, there is something in us that answers to such a challenge. As we watch Job going through his bad time and trying to find daylight, our sympathies go out to him generously. The more so, as his remonstrance is so reasonable. He is not asking for a soft, cushioned, unmanly life. "Is there," he cries, "any taste in the white of an egg?" He is ready for struggle and challenge, so long as things wear some semblance of justice and meaning.

There we are with him; and there, too, is our present consolation, on which we ought to lay all possible emphasis. For, in times like these, we owe it to ourselves not to be niggardly with any suggestions of cheer or stimulus that come our way. And here is one, surely, in the strength of which

we may go all our days—that to eyes that can see, *the ordinary has gone*; the world has been caught in the flame of devastation and tragedy, but in that very flame it has been lit up with new significance. To feel this, and to realize all that it means, is to have our hands on the lever by which, in the prevalent unsettlement and difficulty, life can be lifted to an altogether higher level.

There is one matter on which we ought to make an effort to correct the proverbial shortness of memory. It is only yesterday, so to speak, that food and many other everyday things that used to be taken for granted, had a new light thrown on them. People not given to sentiment could say, in those war-days, that every meal had become a sacrament and that many of life's commonest accessories had grown sacred. In the halcyon days of peace and security, everything, somehow, had grown so cheap. "Easily gained is lightly valued"; and, as a matter of course, we accepted food and clothing and comfort without reflecting that, even then, these could only come to us through channels of hazard and sacrifice. But now, if we are worth anything, that way of looking at things has gone for ever; and in all the years to come we shall count it a point of honour to accept nothing easily and cheaply without grateful reckoning of the human price that has been paid. Thus, by the force of events, we find ourselves persuaded to that sacramental view of common things that should be part and parcel of our religion.

More Virile

And from other than material things the blight of the ordinary has passed; so that—to name but one—religious thought is centuries younger and more virile than it was the other day. Through all the ages, ordinariness has been the curse of religion and the preacher's unpardonable sin; the rehearsal of creeds from which the life has gone, the glib iteration of words without "bite" or vital relation to things as they are. And, so long as nothing particular was happening in the world, and life droned on as usual, this kind of thing might pass without active resentment, even though it was gradually sapping religion and imperilling public worship.

But now all that is changed, for grim reality has crashed into the midst of things. Even the theologically punctilious find themselves tacitly admitting that, in such times as these, what inspires and *makes* a

THINGS THAT MATTER

difference is of more account than all orthodoxies and conventions put together.

The particular concrete meaning of this can be seen at work in two great compartments of religious thought. The whole doctrine of the Future is becoming, in the best sense, nationalized and humanized. The artificial, unconvincing views of heaven and hell that have so long held sway, and are still nominally orthodox, have shrivelled in the burning reality of recent years. Casting off superstition and textual bondage, we are finding a new eschatology, alive and natural, saying little, but suggesting what is beyond words; believing that, as Christ said, there are many dwelling-places in the Father's house, and that there is no need to say more.

A Dominating Thing

Similarly with the Atonement. From something that, to the general mind, was technical and academic, aloof from everyday experience, it has become the thing that dominates all else. Yesterday a few here and there believed it; to-day many more are believing it because they *see* it, or, it may well be, are *living* it. A few years ago man was giving himself for man, and blood was being shed that freedom and safety and all that gives meaning to life might be preserved.

You may call this crude, and may say it is not theology in the technical sense. But many who went through and shared in it feel instinctively that it *links itself* with what was done on Calvary; that it brings the Cross of Christ into the midst of man's agony and sacrifice, giving them some of its own glory, and making atonement no longer the mysterious theme of the school, but the pattern and incentive of human life at its best.

This is necessarily brief and rough and ready, but it serves to point the moral of the diminishing of the ordinary so far as religious thought is concerned. It means that we are being driven to find the heart of reality in all our doctrines; and if, in our day, we are to have the best and most enduring sort of revival, it must come along these lines. Stereotyped phraseology must be scrapped; phrases that are only phrases must go; mere "correctness" or orthodoxy of belief must no longer be considered im-

portant. If we have the *sense* and courage to act on these lines, we shall learn, perhaps for the first time, how full of reality, how vitally in touch with all that most deeply concerns us, the Christian religion is.

The Greatness Within

Last, but far from least, we must cease, in any demoralizing sense, to look on ourselves as ordinary or cheap. For, if our faith have any meaning, *that* most certainly we are not. We have our weak, disappointing, even bad, times—times when we are disgusted with ourselves. But ordinary we are not and never can be. In the most commonplace of us there are hopes and wonderings and half-waking possibilities for which no sky is high enough and no answer too great.

And in that spirit we must try to order our lives—doing our work as if it really mattered, challenging each day as though great things hung on the way it is spent. This is no ordinary world, we are no ordinary people. There is the centre around which our faith is built; and there is nothing like it for putting *life* into a man.



The Quotation

It is the deadly monotony of the ordinary life of the multitude that constitutes a civic, a national danger. . . . The deadly monotony must be broken, daily life must be made more interesting, work more joyous, human nature must be given a fair chance of equable development. To the nation which first realizes the magnitude of the opportunity offered by earth-existence will belong, not by military conquest but by divine right, the supremacy of the future and the gratitude of the human race.—SIR OLIVER LODGE.



THE PRAYER

THOU who art the fountain of life and light, whose coming forth to us is as the morning, I would not have Thee come to find me sleeping, but be of those with whom is the timely inner wakefulness. . . . Make me glad with the gladness that is strength, saying to myself that life is beautiful for all its glooms, and great for all its pettiness.

S. A. TIPPLE.



The Gropers

By
Alice Lowther

HIS eyes were haggard, alert, resentful. He walked slowly, placing each foot with portentous care. Ever and anon he passed experimental hands across his chest and along his thighs. He was exploring his sensations, investigating discomforts, probing for aches. What troubled him most was his pulse; he could feel it pounding against his ear; every moment it seemed to grow fuller, faster. Ah, now it had missed a beat. That was bad. How many heart-beats went to a minute? He must ask Sarah, or get Susan to look it up in one of those books of hers.

An hour ago he had been gay, care-free; his step had been jaunty enough then. A gust of envy shook him. If only he hadn't gone to the doctor's! He'd not felt ill. Just a bit of pain. A bottle of stuff mightn't come amiss. Besides, the doctor was a decent sort; he always enjoyed a crack with him; they could advise about Susan, too. So, with an hour to spare, he had breezed into the surgery. Hum! Suppose he hadn't! Folk with heart trouble dropped down dead, didn't they? Well, what of it? Nothing in that to grouse about. Better death outright than life sap-drained, gutless. What had the doctor said? "Avoid excitement, my dear fellow, that's the main thing. Go softly. Make way for the young. With care, you've many years before you." Pah! Who wanted them—at the price? Give up business, indeed! If he'd not been so bowled over he'd have told the doctor a few things. Sitting there grinning! Some folk were so beastly cheery!

He entered his house unobserved. Breathing heavily, and moving still with an air of pained impressment, he made for the dining-room. It was empty. Good! He didn't feel equal yet to meeting Susan. He needed time.

Sitting low in his chair, his arms hard pressed to his sides, he strove to form plans, to visualize his future. But he could think of nothing now but Susan. The room seemed full of her. He wondered where she was. Poor old Susan! She had had a hard life, and she'd never been really

strong. First the years of struggle; then, just as financial pressure was lifting, the twins. Hum! The twins! Poor little wretches, for ever on the mewl, their whole existence a tragedy and a drain. And, after them, Millie. Was it three years ago, or four, that Millie had fallen ill on their hands? Several times in those earlier days Morrison, exasperated by the invalid's selfishness and caprice, had taken up cudgels for his wife; but Susan had ruled him down with a high hand. Millie was her sister; the nursing of the girl was a right and a duty. Did he grudge the poor thing the food she ate, the space she took? So Morrison had been silenced. What, indeed, could he do? If she liked to turn their home into a hospital, herself into a butt and a drudge, he must e'en put up with it. After all, Millie *was* her sister, and the two seemed to understand each other.

A step in the passage roused him. Susan! He couldn't face her yet; he wasn't ready. Hastily grabbing a paper from the table, he buried himself behind its folds.

"I didn't know you were in, Henry. You don't usually favour us with your company so early."

The man muttered something inaudible. Would she stop or go?

Mrs. Morrison closed the door. He heard the crisping of her dress as she settled into a chair.

For a space there was silence.

Suddenly Morrison flung aside his paper.

"What's up?" he demanded. "Have you nothing to do but stare at a chap?"

"Why should I be always doing things?" asked the woman. Her voice was bitter, acid. She bent a little forward, her eyes wide and glazed. "Why should I be always doing things?" she repeated.

"For goodness' sake don't talk like that. Anybody would think I wanted you to do things."

"Oh, it's nothing to you. Of course not. If I worked my fingers to the bone you'd not care."

Too late Morrison realized his error.

THE GROPERS

plenty. All day long I'm thinking—thinking. Nobody calls. I see nobody. Only Sarah. And sometimes, at meal hours, you. If you've nowhere else to go. If you hadn't to eat and sleep, I'd never set eyes on you. I'm less to you than a servant. It's Sarah who stitches your buttons on, Sarah who keeps you brushed and mended. As for me, I don't count. Even the socks I knit you aren't good enough; they get pushed aside for shop-mades."

"Oh, dear!" groaned the man. If only he'd known! He'd wear the scrubby things to-morrow, corns or no corns!



" 'Why should I be always doing things?' she repeated "

"I thought you liked doing things," he muttered.

"I do, when there's anybody to care. Millie cared. She needed me. Nobody cares now. You don't."

"Come now, Susan. Go steady. There's no making you out these days. What's got you, anyhow?"

"Nothing's got me. Only I'm done. While Millie wanted me I didn't notice. I'd not time. I've plenty of time now—

"You've grown beyond me," went on the woman. "Sarah can do all you want. There's no room for me here. If I start a job, Sarah elbows me out of her way. It's 'Now, don't you worry, mem,' or 'I'll see to that,' or 'I hope I'm still equal to my work, mem.'" She stopped, choking.

"If you are not satisfied with the girl, get rid of her, give her the sack. See?"

Susan's face contorted. She began to cry.

THE QUIVER

"I—I've tried. She won't go. She says she's obeying orders, that you've said I'm not to work."

"Drat the woman! I told her you'd not to be worried. Won't go, eh? The baggage! I'll show her." He half rose, then stopped. "You are sure you want to get rid of her, Susan?" he asked. "It's not just a whim, this? Maids are bad to get, you know. And we've had Sarah a long time. She knows our ways."

The woman wiped her eyes despondently.

"Sarah's all right," she said.

"Blessed if I know what to make of you," exploded the man. "First you blow hot, then cold. And you used to reckon that Sarah was such a treasure."

The woman made a gesture of despair.

"It's not Sarah," she wailed. "It's—it's just that I'm not needed any more. There's nothing for me to do. If the children had lived it would have been different; they'd have wanted me; nobody could have taken my place with them. All these years I've been doing things—always doing things. And there's nothing to show—nothing but graves. It's as if life were over. And I'm not old. Only fifty. I'll last another twenty years, maybe. Things can't go on like this—I tell you they can't."

"Well, let's hear your remedy," snapped the man. He was breathing heavily, and on his cheek burned a red spot.

"Eh?" The woman's vague gaze steadied suddenly, settled to his face.

"You say things can't go on. What are you going to do?"

"Do? What do you mean? I—I was only telling you."

"Hum! Well, listen, and I'll tell you. It's not my fault if I've learnt to do without you. These years you've played nursemaid, things have been none so gay for me. My life ain't been a bed of roses. See? Not that I've grudged Millie anything! Only, if brickbats are flying, I can take my turn at the slings. If I've gone to Sarah, it's been Hobson's choice with me, and don't you forget it."

He seized his paper and spread it, screen-wise, before him. He wanted to shut out her face, with its broken strength and hungry fear. The woman was daft. All very well to say there was nothing for her to do. There was always occupation for folk who wanted it. *She* hadn't far to seek, anyhow. Here was he, suffering—he could feel his heart now, pounding against his ribs. Surely if ever a man needed sym-

pathy, consolation, he did. And this was what he got. Pah! Women were the dickens! A husband wasn't good enough for her, seemingly. She needed a sister to broach her tenderness. No good reckoning she didn't know. She ought to know. A proper wife would have found out months ago. A fat lot she'd care, anyhow. All she wanted was to break loose. A woman of her years! She was only kept from doing it by fear of what folk would say. Huh!

In the distance a bell rang. Someone coming. That was a mercy!

Another and a louder ring.

Morrison's head emerged.

"Sarah gone deaf?"

"She may be dressing," said Susan. "I'll go."

Listening, Morrison heard a familiar voice: "I thought I'd drop in, Mrs. Morrison. Oh, I see your husband's been telling you. He's made the worst of it, too. Dear, dear! I was afraid he might. Too bad! For really there's nothing to worry about. With ordinary care he'll live for years—outlast both of us, in fact. In there, is he? Just step in here a minute, and we'll have a little chat." Then the door closed, and Morrison heard no more.

It was a transformed woman who re-entered the room, and the face she bent on her husband was the face she had borne for her twins, the face that had forced sunshine even into the wastes of Millie's sick soul.

"Why didn't you tell me?" she asked.

"Didn't give me much chance, did you?"

She drew a little closer.

"Forget that, Henry. I was fair moidered."

He looked up at her. "I didn't want to worry you," he said suddenly. "That doctor's an ass. I'll tell him."

She bent and kissed his head where the hair tried to cover the bald.

"Oh, my dear, my bairn," she crooned. "Didn't you know? Didn't you guess? It was what I wanted."

"For me to be ill! Huh! I like that!"

"For you to need me. And the doctor says it's nothing, really. What you want is rest—just care and rest. Oh, Henry, I thought there was nothing left for me. And all the while there was this—you. God is good. It it's like an answer to a prayer."

"A queer kind of prayer," grunted Morrison. "And a mighty queer prayer you must have prayed, according to my way of thinking."

A Chat About Children

A Legal Article
By a
Barrister-at-Law

Wife and Husband Equals at Last

THE last day of July, 1925, was a red-letter day for the mothers of England.

In bygone times a father was an absolute autocrat on matters touching the custody of his children. The mother was powerless. True, the law told her that she was entitled to reverence and respect; but it stood by helpless and inactive when her husband demanded from her the custody of her infant child and tore it from her unwilling arms.

For well-nigh a hundred years Parliament has been recognizing more and more the rights of Motherhood. It did much for her by an Act known as the Guardianship of Infants Act, in 1886; but on the last day of July, 1925, another Act was passed amending and amplifying the old one with the deliberate intention—clearly expressed—of putting her on an absolute equality with her husband in respect of the custody and guardianship of the children—as much hers as his.

The woman whose life is being made unbearable by her husband need never feel that he holds her chained by the threat that if she leaves him he will keep the children. Many a mother has been through Purgatory—an unnecessary Purgatory, more's the pity—because of the double dread that she would see her children no more and that their lives would be hopelessly ruined if left to their father's influence.

Should this be your case, your remedy is at hand. Even while you are still residing with your husband, you may make an application to the Court for an order giving you the custody of the children—*when you leave your husband*.

The Court will go into all the facts, and it is bound by law to pay just as much attention to your rights and wishes as to your husband's. Your husband "gets no pull" now because he is a man and a father. You have every bit as much right to be heard. You and he are equals. But the thing that is really going to outweigh everything else is the welfare of the children. If the Court

thinks they will be better where they are, it will say so. If it is of opinion that the right course is for you to make a separate home for them, it will make an order giving you the custody of the children, providing you do in fact find a home for them in the next three months, and it can also make your husband pay you a reasonable sum a week, a month, or a quarter for the maintenance of the children.

Your application need not cost you much, and there is no need for any publicity. If you do not think you can get more than a pound a week from your husband, go to the police court and ask for your case to be heard *in camera*.

If you hope to get more than a pound, you must go to the County Court or the High Court; but in either case the matter will be dealt with "in Chambers," and if you ask beforehand, it is probable that no one else will be allowed to be there.

The Divorce Court and the Children

The same desire to do what is best for the children dominates the Divorce Court, when unhappy differences arise between married people, and a decision as to the custody of the children has to be made.

There are, of course, two stages to consider—the period up to the granting of the decree *nisi*, during which the question of guilt is wholly in doubt, and after the trial, when guilt or innocence is clearly established. Up to the time of the decree *nisi* it is not easy to lay down any definite rules. The Court looks into all the surrounding circumstances and tries to do the best for the children; but once the trial is over, the usual thing is to give the custody of the children to the innocent party. If the father has been in the wrong, he is not infrequently allowed "access" to the children, that is to say, the right of seeing and talking to them at stated periods. But rarely, if ever, is access granted to a guilty mother. A decree against her in the Divorce Court not only deprives her of the custody of her children, but disentitles her to hold any further speech with them.

THE QUIVER

A Spendthrift Boy

Do not let yourself be troubled over-much if your son runs up some foolish bills in the days of his youth; and by that I mean before he reaches the age of twenty-one. It will naturally cause you some anxiety that he should do so, but do not make it a financial burden for your own neck. You are under no liability whatever to pay any debts contracted by your son, unless you have authorized him to run them up or assented to his doing so. Of course, if he lives at home, there is a very strong presumption that you authorized him to purchase the clothes you see him wearing day by day. And with that suggestion you would not quarrel. It is occasional extravagances that upset you—things of sheer luxury, like expensive cuff-links or gorgeous tie-pins. I should regard the matter—so far as money is concerned—with equanimity. No tradesman is bound to give your infant son credit. He does it at his own risk. He cannot make you pay. And he cannot make your son pay when he does come of age. For the only thing for which an infant can pledge his credit are Necessaries. And things of sheer luxury are not necessities. A little masterly inactivity on your part may teach one or two valuable lessons.

Calf Love

If your son, being under twenty-one, blushing tells you that he is engaged to be married, ship him off, if you can, without further delay, to some distant part of the British Isles, or across the Atlantic, for a short period, and leave the lady in question—who is probably old enough to know better—severely alone.

A promise of marriage made by a boy under twenty-one has no effect in law. A plea of infancy is a complete defence, and no solicitor would let the lady launch an action. But once he comes of age, the matter becomes more dangerous, and some pretty questions of law arise. If he merely

ratifies the promise he made when he was under twenty-one, it does not count. But if he makes a fresh promise, it does! So "Safety first" is the wisest maxim, and I should keep him at a distance till he has learnt common sense, extracting meanwhile a promise of no correspondence.

Insuring the Boy's Life

You are not allowed to take out a policy of insurance on your son's life, whereby, in the event of his death, you would benefit. The reason is obvious. If such a kind of policy became lawful and popular among the criminal classes, the results might be too horrible to contemplate.

But if you could show that you had some special interest in keeping your son alive—in that you had lent him some money which he was working to repay, or that he was helping to support you or pay your rent, then you would be quite justified in insuring his life up to the amount of your pecuniary interest, but not beyond.

You are perfectly at liberty to take out a policy of insurance on your wife's life, and she is entitled to take one out on yours.

Adoption

At the present moment adoption is not recognized by the law of England. It is considered against public policy that any father or mother should endeavour by a deed or document to sign away the rights of control over their children, which the law has given them. If, however, parents do abandon their children to a third party, who cares for them and nourishes them, the law will be very slow to help the parents to reclaim their children at some future date. The law will consider what is best for the children, and in all probability will leave them where they are.

An attempt is being made now to get the law altered in this matter, so that some form of adoption may become legally recognized.

For - -
Children - -
Everywhere

LITTLE FOLKS
The Magazine for Boys and Girls
Price 1/- Monthly

The Lonely Woman in the Country

By One
Who Lives There

THERE is no loneliness like the loneliness you feel in a great crowd," declared Byron; and John Keble has talked of "this crowded loneliness, where ever-moving myriads seem to say: 'Go—thou art naught to us, nor we to thee—away!'" But I cannot altogether endorse the popular belief that the lonely soul is loneliest in a crowd; it has, I fancy, become a popular belief through sheer repetition of ready-made phrases. For I have experienced both loneliness in London and loneliness in the country, and to me, at all events, the loneliness of the country is the harder to bear. The sadness of solitude is accentuated by the nearness of nature.

Loneliness in London—in any large city or town—is a dreadful thing, especially to a woman. And it is probably most dreadful of all to a girl who has left the countryside and her friends behind her—to a girl who has never been used to crowds.

Intensely Lonely

Some years ago I knew, in London, a girl who is to-day a successful novelist, a fairly contented wife, a very proud mother, and the centre of a fairly large social circle. She was intensely lonely when first we made one another's acquaintance in a boarding-house for spinsters (hateful word!). She had left her people behind—down in the heart of the country—to fight for fame and fortune in town; and she confided to me that, although she lived in a boarding-house for spinsters, because she was afraid of London, it made her feel lonelier than ever because it was full of "tabby cats." She did not realize, then, that the tabby cats were really lonely women, warped and soured by years of loneliness, starved of friendship, embittered against the world because the world had treated them so ill; narrow-minded because they had led narrow lives; unfriendly because they had lost the ability to make friends.

That girl would have agreed with Byron, and with Keble, and with all the other writers who maintain that the quintessence

of loneliness is to be found in crowds; but I know better. I, a Londoner, but an orphan, had endured the loneliness of London with something of a stoic's calm, but long enough for a little of the iron to have entered my soul. The girl turned to me, confided in me, because I was the least "tabby" of all the tabby cats in that bleak boarding-house for spinsters. To her the countryside was a warm, intimate, beautiful and friendly thing—because her friends and people were there. I knew that if I stayed many years longer among the tabby cats of Bayswater, I should become as tabby, and as drab, and as dreary, and as unapproachable as any of them. I knew that she, if she stayed there long enough, would lose her freshness, her charm, her keen inquiring interest in life—that her warm blood would turn to vinegar. But, mercifully, she was successful almost from the first as a writer and speedily made friends in editorial offices, so that the boarding-house became a mere sleeping-place long before it had time to become an intolerable prison. She lunched out, dined out, went to theatres. Her friends and her funds accumulated together. With an assured market for her work, she went back to the home of her parents to write in a peaceful, friendly atmosphere till she married and set up a home of her own in London.

Flying from the Town

Meanwhile, she had made me dream of the country and its lesser loneliness (as I was led to believe) so that, in the end, as Cicero has expressed it, I decided "to fly from the town to the country as though from chains." But I knew no one in the country, and in flying to it I did no more than exchange one set of chains for another. And sometimes—it may, of course, be through the sheer contrariness of human nature—I find myself thinking quite regretfully of that soul-stifling abode of "tabby cats," of the pavements where I was jostled by strangers, of the shops and the lights—and of the loneliness that hurt less than the loneliness I now endure because it was

THE QUIVER

associated with being alone among nearly seven million people who didn't know me, instead of being associated with being alone among a thousand people, the majority of whom know me by sight and name, but none of whom offers me any companionship.

In a Sussex Village

When I decided to flee from London, I determined that a Sussex village should shelter me for the rest of my days. Sussex is so freely praised by all the writers for its loveliness, its quaintness, the warm hearts of its people. "The warm hearts of its people"—how that phrase appealed to me when I made my decision; and how often I repeat it to myself ironically, now, in the bitterness of my disillusion! Probably the people in this Sussex village where I dwell are as warm-hearted as the people in any other village in any other county; but they spare none of the warmth of their hearts for me. I think Boyce, the postman, is the friendliest of them all; at all events, he is the most heartening. . . . I like his cheery smile, his simple philosophy; though mostly he brings me only circulars when he is in uniform, and gardens for me very badly when he is out of it.

I bought a little cottage in this village, with the assistance of a building society, and I had high hopes when I entered into possession. It is a tiny place with a large garden—a very lonely place. The lawn is wonderfully pleasant in the summer-time, when I sit there with my books, or busy myself in the borders with a trowel; but in the winter the lanes around are wildernesses of mud, the clouds blot out the distant hills, the village is a sombre little huddle of houses.

I know the names of a hundred flowers, wild and cultivated; I roam the hedgerows and the fields; and in late April the woods are a dream of loveliness in their whisperings and their bluebells. I appreciate to the full the return of spring, with its scents, its miracle of unfolding leaf and bursting bud.

I love the summer with its brief, perfumed nights, its brilliant sunshine, its prodigality of blossom. But all the time I want to share the joy of these things with some other kindred soul . . . and there is no other kindred soul. I wake up in the grey dawn and shiver at the thought of old age—helpless old age, and none to trouble their heads about me, no one to say,

when the years have heaped up on my shoulders and bowed them down: "Yes, she is old and rather a trial, but she was very good to me, and I *want* to look after her!"

And when the autumn comes, with the tones and tints of nature's mortuary, with its dead, wet leaves and the desolation of decay all around me, there are days when I could scream to save my sanity; when I would give worlds for the touch of a friendly hand, for the merest trifle of trivial talk from the lips of someone who knew and understood—and liked me.

Winter Consolations

The winter, curiously enough, is less hard to bear. One can go for walks in the daytime with head erect and no outward visible signs of the empty longing in one's breast; one can tramp in the rain and the mud, and come back to the fire that has been banked up by the pert little day-girl, and with a lamp and a book and drawn curtains and warmth, one can pretend that life is not so bad. One can practise all sorts of little self-deceits to cheat one's mind. One can picture a cradle, down there by the hearth, and look up to welcome the man that never came into one's life as he walks in at the door with a "Well, Nellie, old girl!" One can croon a lullaby over one's dead hopes and the little thing that never fluttered under one's starved heart. And, afterwards, one can kneel beside the bed in the chill little room upstairs and pour out to one's God the troubles, the emptiness—that one shares with thousands of other women. . . . An old maid, but not altogether a warped old maid. At least the country does help to stay, if not wholly to avert, the warping that is engendered by loneliness in a town. One is much nearer to nature, so much closer to the earth whence we came, whither we go. But oh, the country is intensely lonely.

And what of those people who know me by sight and by name? There are the tradespeople, who talk to me about the weather over the counter, who call for orders and deliver goods. Somehow, I cannot make friends with them: they do not expect me to be friendly; they are suspicious of my smile, my poor little jest. I am not of their class: I am to be served, I am to help make a profit for them in their business; sometimes, perhaps, I am to be cheated—especially as I have no man to uphold my rights. There were, for ex-

THE LONELY WOMAN IN THE COUNTRY

ample, those chickens—the White Sussex, the Rhode Island, the Buff Orpingtons. It was Boyce, the postman, who told me that Waker, the man at the general stores, got them for me from three neighbouring farmers at less than half the price I paid him, and laughed in the village inn at the way he had done me.

The Butcher's Wife

I like the look of Mrs. Jessop, the wife of the butcher. She is young and beautiful in her healthy village way, and she has always a smile for me. But when I talk to her about her babies, she murmurs a word or two and turns to the next customer, as though I had said: "This conversation must now cease!" She thinks, no doubt, that I know nothing whatever about babies. Alas, dear God, I know but very, very little about them, but there are days when I could steal Mrs. Jessop's littlest baby out of its pram by the shop-window because it crows at me! I know so little about babies . . . and I should like to know so much!

The fishmonger—we actually have a fishmonger in the village, though his fish at times is far from fresh—calls at the back door with a debonair manner and fancies himself as a wit. When first I came to the village to live, I was so lonely that I talked to him one morning—on politics, of all things, I remember. But almost immediately he became familiar. He said: "You oughtn't to live here all alone, you know. 'Tain't good for no one. You ought to have got married!"

No; I cannot make friends with the tradespeople. Some of them consider themselves my inferior; some of them palpably consider me their inferior. A village is more full of caste than any town. I think, sometimes, that our villages must study caste more intensely than all the natives of India! And I must conform to the rules, or lose it utterly myself.

The Squire

There is the squire. Who made him squire I do not know, since he never was Lord of the Manor. He wishes me "Good morning," on the doorstep of the church whenever I encounter him there on a Sunday morning. He spoke to me once when I kept a stall at the local bazaar. But I am as much beneath him, in his view, as poor Purdling—who has twice been convicted of poaching and gone to jail for it—is beneath me in the view of this aloof community.

If I lived in a larger house and kept a car and a chauffeur, no doubt the squire's wife would have called on me. But no one has ever called on me in all the five years I have been here, except the tradespeople, the district nurse, Mr. Jamby's housekeeper, who brings the parish magazine—and who is the subject of much un-Christian scandal among the villagers just because Mr. Jamby happens to be a widower—and the vicar.

The Vicar

The vicar calls on me once a month; and once in two months, I suppose, he has a cup of tea with me in the little sitting-room where I fight so many of my battles for serenity of mind over aching of heart. He talks to me of this and that, but always in a far-off way, as though this were a duty-call and all his thoughts were somewhere else. He is, I believe, a very devout man; but, obviously, he has no use—apart from parochial use—for lonely spinsters who live in little cottages. I cannot blame him! He preaches loving kindness; he urges a sort of Utopian communism; he was prime mover in the building of a woman's institute; he organizes concerts, encourages local dramatic talent in dreadfully bad presentations of well-known plays at the Village Hall.

There are some half-dozen cottages near me, each in an acre or so of ground, the occupants of which are mainly people who have retired from business and sought the country for its peace and quiet and beauty. Some of them are friendly with one another, and occasionally my immediate neighbours toss me a few remarks about gardening or poultry—keeping when we happen to be working in sight of one another. But, plainly, none of them wants to make friends with a lonely old maid, though I should dearly like to make friends with some of them. They probably think me uninteresting, a narrow-minded old bore; but, if only they knew the truth, my worst fear is just lest I should become what they are prone to imagine me.

There is a girl of twenty, three doors up the lane, to whom I lend books: I met her at the Woman's Institute in its early days; but she is overflowing with the joy of life: she has a boy—she rides on the pillion of his motor-cycle; and to her I am nothing more than a sort of lending library, plus, perhaps, a poor old thing to be pitied. When I invite her to tea she has always

THE QUIVER

a prior engagement; and her parents, whenever I try to converse with them, are as chilly as the east wind that howls in the chimney.

Social Intercourse

I have made all sorts of efforts to secure some measure of social intercourse, but in vain. I went to a whist drive at the Village Hall soon after I came here to live. The room was terribly crowded, and long before the interval arrived it was thick with the smoke of strong pipes and many cigarettes. I found that I had made a social mistake. Most of the tradespeople were there, many of their children; together with cottagers, carters, farm-hands.

I am afraid I lost caste by going. Evidently I had been expected to buy a ticket in order to help the local cricket club, but I had *not* been expected to use that ticket. I felt as though I had broken in upon a family gathering and disturbed it; and I have never dared to repeat such an experiment. Boyce, the postman, said to me next day, when he was planting the bulbs: "I saw you at the whist drive last night, m'm; but, o' course, that sort o' thing's not in your line. We looks after the villagers, down here, and the tradespeople looks after themselves, while as for the gentry, they've got their cars and their house-parties and all sorts o' goings-on. But it often seems to me as though there's something wanted round here for the people in between, if you understand me."

If I understood him! I understood him all too well. An intelligent young fellow, that postman, even if he is a very poor gardener. And he is so right. There *is* nothing in the social side of the country for the "people in between." Those people must be sufficient unto themselves. They must provide their own amusements, their own distractions; and when they consist of families, with friends to come and see them and with friends to go and see, it is easy enough for them to be happy, whatever the social shortcomings. But for a woman who is all alone. . . .

I know that everybody in the village thinks of me as an old maid, and old maids are always regarded as unsociable creatures, not because they are, but because they are liable to be—largely because no one tries to associate with them. But if I am an old maid, I am not yet an old woman; my blood is not yet turned to vinegar. I am nearly forty-three, to be sure, and there are

a good many grey hairs among the brown; but I fight—oh, *how* I fight—to keep the lines of discontent out of my face, the drear hardening droop from my mouth. I have no dread of the crows'-feet that will eventually gather round my eyes—it is the faintest beginning of the scowl, the snarl, the sour look in the eyes, that I dread to find upon my face when I look in my mirror every morning. My heart is still warm, though it has ached so often; I should respond with eagerness to the least little offer of sympathy, of understanding. I should make a good friend, a staunch friend, for friendship would give a new meaning to life. But no one wants my friendship: I am forced in upon myself; and one of these days, I suppose, the softness, the kindness, the womanliness will all die out of me.

God forbid! And yet, isn't it all this that loneliness does for a woman in the end?

The Plight of Thousands

I have taken refuge in pen and ink, trying to describe my plight—the plight of thousands of other women—and by rights, I suppose, I ought not to finish without suggesting a remedy, a way out. But, after ten years of loneliness in London and five years of loneliness in the country, I cannot visualize the remedy, or suggest a way out. I have thought and thought about it, but what can be done? There are guilds and societies in the cities and towns that have been specially devised for such as I; but the most that these guilds and societies attempt is to bring together the lonely—and the lonely don't want to mingle with the lonely; they want to mingle with those who are *not* lonely; they want to lose their loneliness and to forget it in the companionship and friendship of those who have never known what it is like! And how is that to be accomplished?

No; I am afraid that the only real cure for a woman's loneliness, in middle age, is that which fate, chance, Providence—call it what you will, but I prefer to call it Providence—may provide at any moment, or may never provide at all. Quite accidentally, as it would appear, someone sometimes comes into one's life out of the everywhere—and the loneliness is gone. It may be a man, it may be another woman . . . but it is the perfect cure.

I live alone, sometimes reviling my fate, sometimes in the depths of despair; *but hope is always with me!*



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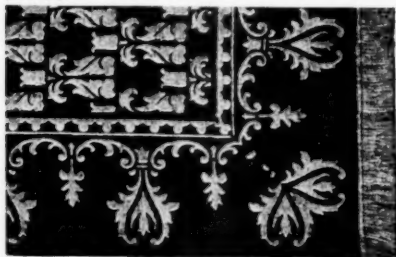
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Problem Pages

The Husband's Will

I HAVE two letters from women who tell me that they are compelled to submit to tyranny on the part of their husbands. One writer says: "My husband seems to think that I and my son must submit absolutely to any injustice." The gist of a very long letter from my second correspondent is that her husband, who appears to be suffering from religious mania, shows no consideration for any member of his family.

And I am asked to "help and advise." Well, I think my readers know how easy it is for me to extend my sympathy to all who are in mental distress, and that it has been possible for me at times to help perplexed correspondents, largely, perhaps, because an outsider can look at a problem with detachment and without any prejudices or ready-made ideas on the subject. But it is never easy to help and advise those who are suffering unhappiness because of the selfishness of others.

It is the fate of tens of hundreds of women to have to endure unkindness from their husbands, and among the saints of this world must be reckoned those brave wives who keep a smiling face to the world while inwardly suffering agonies from the callous selfishness of the men whom they have married.

What can one say to help or advise such readers? Sometimes a temporary separation will bring a man to his senses. I do not counsel nagging or tearful appeals; but where patience and hopefulness and kindness have not brought a reward, it is often a good thing to show a more determined front, and, where it is possible to do so, to leave the husband for a while to reflect on the loneliness which his conduct has brought him. Only I know too well that unless the wife has independent means, or extraordinarily tactful friends, these "escapes" are difficult to arrange.

Sometimes the help of a man friend of both husband and wife may be enlisted with good results. A selfish man is occasionally made to feel ashamed if he knows

The Husband's Will—Nursing as a Career—A Domestic Opening By Barbara Dane

that his conduct is apparent to outsiders, and especially to other men, and shame may bring about a change in conduct that nothing else can.

And if measures such as these fail, the only advice that I, or, I think, that anyone could give, would be that the wife should try and find as much happiness and pleasure in hobbies and friends and anything that can take her mind away from her urgent problems.

To both my correspondents I might add: "Do not give up hope. The thing you least expect to happen so often does actually happen in life that you may find the change in your husband which would restore the happiness and serenity of your home. And both of you have sons, and in your motherhood you must surely find a little consolation, and a little conviction that life, after all, has its purpose for you, however much you may have suffered, however deep are the wounds. And my tender sympathy to both of you, and a regret that where I would gladly do much I can do so little."

Recitations

Miss Mabel Etchells, 38 Grosvenor Street, Wallasey, Cheshire, would like to exchange recitations. She sends me an interesting letter, for which I thank her sincerely, and am sorry that I have not space in which to give her list of recitations which she is anxious to exchange, so will readers please write to her direct.

From Australia

Oh, these lonely men in all parts of the world who want to be put in touch with women correspondents! "Lonely Man" had so many letters in reply to his appeal to me some months ago that I am afraid he did not know what to do with them, and now I have a letter from a young man of twenty-five who went out to Victoria, Australia, two years ago, and who says: "I feel lonely at times. I would exchange photographs and write in a friendly manner only." Well, if any letters come to me

THE QUIVER

for this young man, I will send them on, if they are stamped, but, please remember, any of you who are interested, that there my responsibility ends, for I know nothing of my far-a-way correspondent except what he tells me about himself.

A Dilemma

From Ealing comes a really difficult problem, which is, perhaps, best told in the writer's own words:

"Some time ago I went to stay with an old school-friend who is engaged to be married. She was anxious that I should meet her *fiancé*, and I went to see her with that object more or less in view. I stayed several weeks, and during that time I got to know her *fiancé* very well. Unfortunately, I got to care for him, and if I could have found any excuse for breaking short my visit I would have done so. However, I was careful never to show my feeling, and it was a great shock to me when this man told me one day that he had made a dreadful mistake in getting engaged to my friend, and that he was in love with me. We decided, of course, that in loyalty to my friend we must not even think of a breaking-off of the engagement, and I did then make an excuse to finish my visit, and returned home. Since then, however, I have had several letters from the man in question imploring me to marry him, although, as yet, he has said nothing of his altered feelings to my friend. I do not, from what I know of him, think that he is the type of man who falls in love easily and as easily out. I think he does realize that he has made a grave mistake, and that we could find happiness together. But he feels in honour bound to marry my friend, unless I can assure him that I think the more honourable way would be to tell her what has happened. So, you see, it is up to me to make a decision, and I do not know what to do. I know my friend loves this man, but she is not a woman who would be content to accept a second-best affection."

Surely, the only honest thing to do is to tell the girl what has happened. It would be a cruel thing for the man to marry her if his heart is really given to another woman; but, before the two of you wreck the happiness of this unfortunate woman, be sure that you know your minds. It is pretty plain that this girl has got to suffer sooner or later, and this is a case where it had better be before marriage rather

than after. If I were you, I should tell the man that you will have no communication with him at all for, say, three months. If at the end of that time he still feels that he has made a mistaken engagement, then he had better tell his *fiancée* and ask her to release him. There is just a chance that the mistake is not in his engagement, but in his feelings for you, and time and detachment should prove which is the woman he really loves.

Nursing as a Career

I am asked what kind of a future hospital nursing holds for women. From a mercenary standpoint, not much, I am afraid. It is true, of course, that a Sister, who may be paid £100 a year with her board, lodging, laundry, and medical attendance, is much better off than a secretary or shorthand-typist with a salary of £3 a week. But the nurse works much harder; her hours are longer, she has great responsibilities, and unless she gets a matron's post, or engages in private nursing, her salary is not likely to rise above £100 a year, and many nurses do not get beyond £70 or £80.

Nursing, it seems to me, is essentially vocational work. Nothing but a real love of nursing could compensate for the drawbacks of institutional life. When the typist leaves her office her day's work is done, and she is able to escape into another atmosphere. But the nurse who lives as well as works in a hospital has no such change, and very many girls have given up nursing because they found the "living-in" system too difficult and exacting.

Nursing is not an easy life. It calls for the best qualities in a woman, and especially for self-sacrifice, and no girl should think of becoming a probationer unless she genuinely likes the work; otherwise, she will suffer many disappointments and disillusion.

I suggest that my correspondent, who writes from a northern manufacturing town, should write to the matron of one of her local hospitals asking for an interview, where she would be told much about hospital life that would help her.

Hard Cases

A young Manchester married woman writes to me about her brother, who has become a great problem in the last few years. She says:

"For the last year my brother has been

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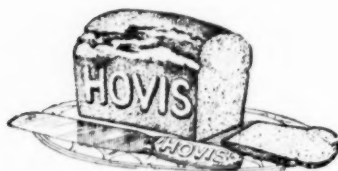
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Cassell's

unable to get work. My husband has done what he can for him, and I have gone without several things which I wanted, somewhat to my husband's annoyance, in order to keep my brother decently clothed. One or two friends have suggested to me lately that my brother is a slacker, and that so long as there is anyone to help him he will not make any serious effort to get work. I don't think I agree with this opinion; but, at the same time, I am worried because my husband is constantly suggesting that we have really done enough for G., and that he must show some spirit and fend for himself. He is twenty-five, and fairly strong. The question is: ought I to go on doing what I can for him in the hope that he will get a job, or should I tell him quite frankly that he must in future depend on himself?"

These hard cases are hard in more senses than one. The trouble about all such people is that their friends may exhaust all their resources in trying to help them, and find at the end of a few weeks that the unfortunate victims of distress are in exactly the same position as they were before. To know that the gift or the loan will really set someone on his feet is to give point to the sacrifice; but my own experience has been that it is not always helping a person to give him money. And there comes a point for most of us when we can do nothing more because we have already given all that we are able, and the out-of-work young friend in whom we are interested has then to make a supreme effort to get work—and often he gets it.

It requires a great knowledge of human nature to be able to decide if a refusal to give any further help is going to provide the necessary stimulus to activity, or whether it is simply going to push a weak man down a little farther.

In your own case I should be inclined to give your brother a time-limit. If you can afford to do it, it might be a good plan to pay his fare out to one of the Colonies, where on the land he would, at any rate, be able to live by his own exertions. But make it clear that at the end of six weeks or three months he will have to look out for himself, and as he is a young and able-bodied man, I do not think that you will find that you have made a mistake. My sympathy to you, because I know how difficult and perplexing such cases are.

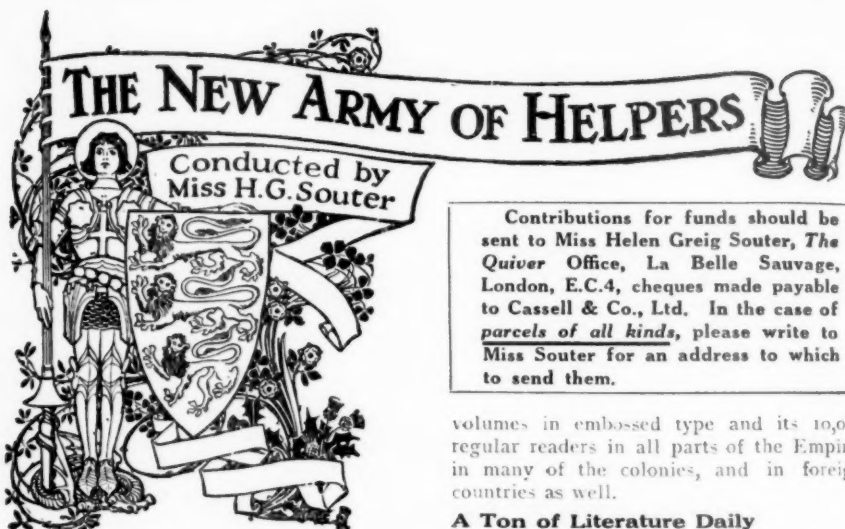
A Question of Music

A young couple ask if they ought, in my

opinion, to buy a piano in order that their little girl of eight should have lessons. Well, in reply to such a question, I should advise that the parents wait a little and discover if the child has any real love of music. I don't like even to think of the money, time, and effort that are wasted in giving lessons to children who have no instinct for music, and who, after years of study, are unable to play a single piece with imagination and sympathy. Before you spend money on instruments and lessons, let the child hear some good music; ask some musical friend to give her a few informal lessons to discover if she has any aptitude for playing the piano, and then buy one.

A Domestic Opening

I have heard recently of two girls who are doing very well in a rather novel branch of domestic work in a prosperous London suburb, and as I am often asked about domestic openings for women, I thought that some of my readers might be interested. The girls are two sisters who live at home. One is an excellent cook, and the other an expert in parlour work. They go out together three or four evenings a week to accept engagements to prepare and serve dinners. One of the girls said to me: "We found that several of our friends who have only daily women or 'chars' much preferred entertaining at home to entertaining in a restaurant; but, as hostesses, they did not like the trouble and inconvenience of cooking and serving dinner for a number of people. So my sister and I offered to take on the job. Gradually we became known, and now we have a good connexion. I do the dinner while my sister both arranges the table and waits. Unless given instructions to the contrary, I always try to cook as economically as possible. Our fees vary according to the work to be done; but we do not now get less than a guinea for our joint services. I do not say that there is a great deal of money to be made out of this visiting cooking and waiting, but my sister and I average a couple of pounds a week each. I should add that we are not above washing up, so that the kitchen is left exactly as it was, and my sister wears a pretty brown uniform for her work. I think that many girls living at home might make money if they followed our example; but, of course, it is necessary that the cook and the waitress should be experts at their jobs.



Contributions for funds should be sent to Miss Helen Greig Souter, *The Quiver* Office, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.4, cheques made payable to Cassell & Co., Ltd. In the case of *parcels of all kinds*, please write to Miss Souter for an address to which to send them.

MY DEAR READERS,—It is positively refreshing in these days to come across an organization which has bravely held its own and accomplished untold good for over forty years without making a public appeal for money, and this unique distinction belongs to the National Library for the Blind. The work has been carried on so unostentatiously that comparatively few of the outside public know anything of its magnitude or the immense joy it has brought into the lives of thousands. Verily, by its means "those who sat in darkness have seen a great light."

A Modest Beginning

Like many another splendid enterprise which has attained world-wide prominence, it had a very humble beginning and owed its inception to the keen sympathy and warm-heartedness of a blind woman, Miss Arnold, of Hampstead, with the co-operation of her friend, Mrs. Dow. They started a library on a grant of £25 from Gardner's Trust with a small collection of books in a tiny room in Hampstead, and these they lent out at a penny a volume to a small circle of blind readers, producing them, as opportunity occurred, by themselves in Braille. Little did they dream that, although their names are unknown and unsung by the world at large, their day of small things would assume enormous dimensions at 18 Tufton Street, with its 100,000

volumes in embossed type and its 10,000 regular readers in all parts of the Empire, in many of the colonies, and in foreign countries as well.

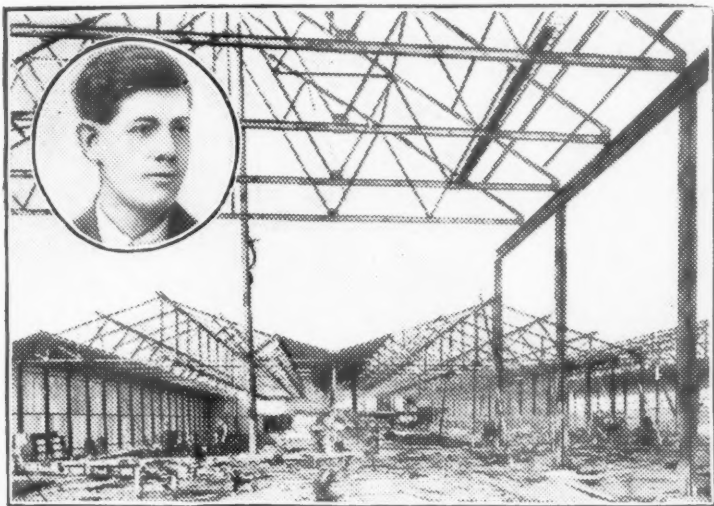
A Ton of Literature Daily

I paid a visit there recently and was greatly impressed by all I saw and by the figures furnished by Miss E. Pearson, the organizing secretary. She informed me that in 1908 the number of volumes issued was 25,000, which in 1915 had increased to 46,000. The following year, when the Library became free, the number of books issued reached the splendid total of 177,000. Such statistics are difficult to grasp, and it may be less a task on the imagination if it is realized that 500 to 800 volumes are daily dispatched, and these represent over one ton of literature—not such an immense amount when one remembers that there are 35,000 people in this country alone who depend largely for their reading matter on this excellent institution.

"Dream books are each a world" to those of us in full possession of our faculties: how much more are they a necessity to those shut-in and shut-off ones who have either been born blind or have become blind. They long inexpressibly for a way of escape from their darkness, their isolation, and their troubles, and the Library provides a golden key to open wide their prison doors and set them free to wander in the glorious realms of literature, art or music, and scale their farthest heights equally with their sighted friends.

The Library has far outgrown its accommodation, extensive as it appears to the eye of the casual visitor. It is housed in a large building, with several open, octagonal galleries stacked from floor to ceiling with

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THE NEW ARMY OF HELPERS

bookshelves bursting with tomes of every description. Its beneficent work is sadly handicapped and its usefulness imperilled unless funds are forthcoming very soon to enable the committee to start building operations on an adjoining site, already acquired, thus minimizing the cost and labour entailed by a removal.

Extension

So urgent was the need for extension that, for the first time in its history, a public appeal for £30,000 was issued, supported by such influential men as the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Duke of Portland, Lord Shaw of Dunfermline, Lord Grey of Fallodon, and the Duchess of Argyll. Lord Grey is one of the most distinguished of its readers, and some time ago, when presenting prizes to blind children in a reading competition, he gratefully acknowledged the value of the Library. In the course of a short speech he said: "My qualification for praising the reading is simply this: I know the great difficulty in reading Braille, having been myself to a large extent dependent upon it; to have to learn Braille in adult life contributes to a proper sense of humility, and I can appreciate the work that is being done by this Library; it is worthy of every support for the resources of pleasure it brings to blind people."

In addition to supplying 230 public libraries and societies with books in Braille, many blind tutors and teachers are furnished with text books on mathematics, science, languages, so that the field covered is a very extensive and catholic one, for, after all, the blind world is but a mirror of this, and the books which appeal to you and me carry with them a far stronger appeal to our blind brothers and sisters. They may love fiction, as we all do; but they leaven their novel reading with a varied selection of history, economics, biography, science, etc. The most popular book of all, I was told, is Morley's "Life of Gladstone." The newest books are added as they are published, or as soon after as is possible, so that a blind person hearing a new book discussed may put it on his library list and will have it sent to him in due course, and he no longer need feel "out of things" with his own circle or the public generally.

It is only when one is confronted by the sight of the volumes in the Library that one realizes the amount of space necessary

to house them. It is not possible for any blind reader, short of one who lives in a palace, to acquire a library of his own, since each Braille volume stands 14 inches high, by 8 inches broad, and 2 inches thick, and weighs 5lb. Thus the Bible runs into 38, Shakespeare into 43, Pickwick into 16, and Froude's History of England into 100 volumes. Even the average novel makes from 4 to 8 volumes, and what weighs 3 lb. to an ordinary person tips the scales at 48½ lb., or 4¼ cwt., to a blind reader!

It is, therefore, very evident that only the Library can tackle the problem of reading for a large section of the community, which includes 400 ex-service men at St. Dunstan's, who, but for its services, would become that unthinkable person—a bookless man.

Converting into Braille

"How are the books converted into Braille type?" was the question which instantly rose to my lips, and hereby hangs a most interesting tale. Just as the Library was started by voluntary workers, so its work has been maintained, and much of its success must be attributed to the patient, steady services and noble devotion of a small army of helpers who have given up their lives or their leisure to transcribe their own favourites or those of others into Braille. It is rather a laborious business, since each letter is represented by six dots, pricked out on strong parchment paper by a metal tool like a gimlet. In recent years it has been found possible to reproduce sounds phonetically as in shorthand, and thus save time and space; but it means the most painstaking and arduous work. A machine after the style of a typewriter facilitates the work to a certain extent, but many of the translators prefer the original method. Anyone who devotes all her time—the majority of the workers are women in the country and in Scotland—might accomplish the translation of an ordinary-sized book in the course of a month's time; but anyone who could only do so in their leisure would require four or five months for the task.

Some of them have been engaged in the work for many years, and still cheerfully continue their self-denying labours without fee or reward, save the consciousness that they are ministering to the necessities of their less fortunate neighbours, who appreciate immensely the fact that they can

THE QUIVER

read for themselves now and even to others, instead of being wholly dependent on their relations.

The Teaching of Braille

Fresh volunteers offer their services from time to time—there were over 100 last year—and these undergo a very strict course of tuition by correspondence, under the direction of one of the Library experts, for three months. At the end of that time they sit an examination, and if successful are granted a certificate of efficiency. Once enrolled on the list they have the work sent to them, and they in turn forward the sheets of Braille to headquarters, where they are very carefully proof-read by a blind girl who obligingly rattled off a page of Braille as easily as any expert, sighted reader.

From this department the various sheets are sent up-stairs to be treated to a coating of shellac, to enable them to resist the tear and wear of much handling. As a matter of fact, the books are wonderfully clean, much more so than the usual library book—well thumbed and greasy, but as they so frequently pass through the post, their bindings are apt to give way. The volumes are repaired here, as well as bound, in a very compact manner by a small staff on the premises.

It is good to know that the Post Office carries these big tomes for a penny each, and even this is paid for in the case of those who cannot afford to defray postage.

A staff of forty-five men and the rest women and girls—is engaged in registering, classifying, and distributing the books, and their labours, and the upkeep of the Library is maintained at a cost of £10,000 per annum—a modest sum when one realizes that the average novel may cost anything from £5 to £10.

£5,000 Still Required

As a result of the appeal for the Extension Fund, the Carnegie Trust promised £15,000, provided an equal amount were obtained from other sources. Queen Mary, who has visited the Library, was greatly interested, and sent a contribution. The Ministry of Health made a grant of £300, the L.C.C. £1,000, Sir Arthur Pearson's Memorial Fund £1,000, Gardner's Trust—by whose gift the Library was originally started—voted £500, and several thousand pounds have been raised by subscriptions. Owing, however, to the fact that the best

part of the money was given conditionally, the work cannot be commenced until the entire sum is in hand.

As a thankoffering for one of the greatest boons of life—the gift of sight—shall we not all help a little towards this most deserving of objects, and so lighten the darkness of thousands in our midst? I shall be delighted to receive sums, however small, and forward them to Miss Pearson for the Library Extension Fund.

Our Fire Fund

Owing to the bookbinders' strike, which upset the publication and distribution of the QUIVER, so that many regular subscribers were a fortnight later than usual in getting their copies, the response to my appeal for cosy hearths and bright fires for many invalids and others was rather slow and disappointing; however, I refused to be discouraged. I had faith that the Lord would provide, and I felt I could trust our Helpers and readers; so I set about addressing the envelopes, believing that the £50 which would be required to fill them and make happy the hearts of fifty or sixty recipients and their families would be forthcoming.

At the time of writing—December 9—the sum necessary, with a good margin, has been contributed, for which I am truly thankful; but the same sum will be necessary every month until April if the good work is to be continued, and owing to the prevalence of the cold snap the appeals for assistance are unusually pathetic and numerous.

Extracts from Letters

"Your great kindness came to-day. Thank you so very, very much, not only for the 15s., but for the kind words with it. A letter from you is always a pleasure to me. . . . How good of you to tell me that I shall benefit from the Fire Fund. God bless you for all."

A widow with a young family says:

"I have received so much goodness from The New Army of Helpers that my heart is overflowing with gratitude; I do not know how I should have managed without the parcels we have received. They have lightened my burdens in many ways, and also helped to cheer me when the dark outlook has seemed to absorb all the pluck I may possess."

One Meal a Day

The wife of a professional man, the mother of three children, expecting a baby in February, writes:

"I am sorry to say my husband's work has been non-existent for the last few months, so

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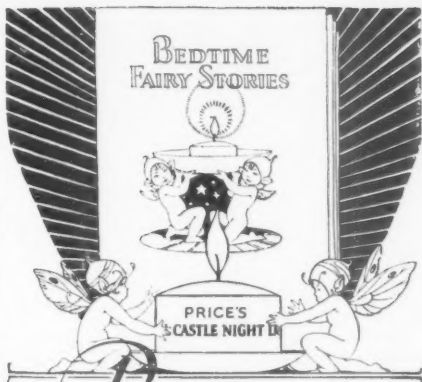
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THE NEW ARMY OF HELPERS

we are having a terribly hard struggle; but I am determined to keep the home together somehow for the sake of the children. I have reduced my own food to one small meal a day, so as to give them three decent ones, and my husband is living on as little as possible, too, and doing his utmost to get more work, though without much success. I am afraid this is rather a doleful letter; but I wanted you to see how very much your kind help is appreciated and what a great blessing it is."

Think of it: one meagre meal a day in the bitter cold weather and under such conditions. Can't we do something to tide this brave mother and her little family over a rough part of her toilsome road?

"An Heroic Mother," for whom I appealed in December last, wishes me to thank all the kind, anonymous friends who sent her parcels. She feels so thankful and at the same time so churlish when she cannot return thanks personally to each and all.

Those of our readers who were touched by the case of the young woman to whom I referred at the same time will be much pleased and interested to know that their kindnesses in the matter of money and clothes have been immensely appreciated and have restored her faith in God and humanity. In the course of a very grateful letter she writes:

"I am just overwhelmed by your kindness; it is unbelievable almost, and has made me determined that whenever I am able I will try to follow your example by helping any less fortunate than I—that is the only way I can ever hope to do so."

Children's Clothing, Etc.

The need for clothing, boots and shoes, etc., for children of all ages is still very clamant, and so is the demand for warm underwear for invalids and others, as well as warm quilts for several beds. Some of our invalids are clamouring for magazines and books, and several are still writing piteous appeals for letters from correspondents who would send them cheerful messages once in a while.



In a Library for the Blind

(By kind permission of the "Daily Chronicle.")

Fifteen Shillings Weekly

One of the saddest cases of the New Poor within my ken is that of a professional woman who has been an invalid suffering from heart trouble for many years and quite unable, willing and independent in spirit as she is, to earn anything. She lives by herself in a tiny cottage in the country, with only a woman for an hour or two in the day "to do for her." She is entirely without relatives, and her only source of income is from two funds, which yield her fifteen shillings a week. I have appealed to the secretaries of three or four funds which I thought she had a claim upon, but all of them began to make excuses, and now I can only trust to the generosity of some of the readers who are willing to lend a helping hand in the matter.

Votes for the British Home for Incurables at Streatham

I should be thankful for a few votes on behalf of Miss E. O., a middle-aged woman,

THE QUIVER

suffering from rheumatoid arthritis and quite incapable of supporting herself. This is a very deserving case, and highly recommended.

A Sam Brown Belt

Has any reader a Sam Brown belt, in any condition, which he or she wants to dispose of, as I have an inquiry from a youthful writer with a taste for adventure, sadly handicapped by ill health and lack of means.

S.O.S. Fund.—C. N. Watson, £1; "Scirburn," 5s.; Anon, £1; Miss E. M. Wood, £1; "An Old Maid," £1; Miss G. M. Swinger, £2; Anon, Tunbridge Wells, £5; Mrs. A. Seaborn, 10s.; "H. E.," Brixton, £1; Mrs. Stewart, 5s.; Mrs. E. M. Nichols, 5s.; M. G. S., £3; "Country Rustic," 10s.; A. W. S., 5s.; The Misses Toplis, £3; Miss M. B. Scatter, £1; Mrs. Pae, 10s.; Miss Turner, 10s.; Miss Edith E. Helyar, £1 1s.; A. K. M., £2; Misses L. and E. Blease, £1; C. M. Woodham, £5; Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Glover, 10s.; Miss E. Higson, £2; M. J. C. E., 10s.; Miss Dolly Robinson, 5s.; Mrs. M. A. Peacock, £1; Miss Georgina Crouch, 10s.; Anon, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Helen Moore, £10 10s.; H. Pryer, 5s.; Mrs. E. Day, 10s.; "Remembrance," £1; Mrs. Walden, 3s.; T. Hancock, 10s.; "E. C.," £2; C. A. Faulkner, 10s. 6d.; G. W., 5s.; Mrs. E. Draper, £1; W. Brayshaw, £2; Mrs. M. Pickles, 10s.; "E. B. B.," £10; Miss Alice Peters, 5s.; Mrs. M. A. Gowing, £5; Miss Elizabeth Quincey, £2 2s.; Anon, £2 2s.; Miss Macnab, £5; Miss Willcox, 10s.; Miss Jean McKersie, 10s.; I. R. B., £3 3s.; H. S. H., 10s.; Miss Frances Kirke, £2; T. R., 16s.; M. A. B. Lyon, £1; H. A., £2; Mrs. Sturgeon, £1; Mrs. MacNeill, £3.

Dr. Grenfell's Mission.—"Country Rustic," 3s.; Mrs. M. Pickles, £1.

St. Dunstan's.—"Country Rustic," 2s.

Dr. Barnardo's.—"A Reader," 10s.; "Coun-

try Rustic," 2s.; T. Hancock, 2s. 6d.; T. R., 4s.

Save the Children Fund.—"Country Rustic," 2s.

British Home for Incurables.—"Country Rustic," 2s.; T. R., 4s.

St. John's Hospital.—T. R., 4s.

Crutch and Kindness League.—Miss M. R. Porte, 1s.

Gifts of Clothing, Reading Matter, Letters, Etc.

I have to acknowledge, with many grateful thanks, the kind helpfulness of the following:

Miss J. Sherlock, Mr. W. W. Smith, Miss L. Bailiss, Miss C. A. Taylor, Miss A. O. Stott, Miss D. Jobson, Mrs. Drury, Miss Peckover, Miss Burton, Mrs. McDonald, Miss Podmore, Miss Gillings, Miss W. N. Warner, Mrs. Haywood, Mrs. Mytton, Mrs. Souter, Mrs. Watson, Miss Harvey, Miss M. J. Scott, Miss E. Wallace, Miss E. M. Hunt, Mrs. M. A. Grey, Mrs. Nesfield, Miss E. Smith, Miss Rust, Miss Field, Mrs. Billing, Miss Sadd, Miss C. M. Woodham, Mrs. Walden, Mrs. C. Howard, Mrs. Walker, Miss Tempest, Miss R. Kelly, Miss B. H., Mrs. A. B. Bayne, Miss McKinney, Miss A. M. Swinger, Miss E. M. Wood, Mrs. McNeill, Mrs. M. Knowles, Miss E. Roe, Mrs. E. M. Brown, Miss J. Farnworth, the anonymous sender of three baby jackets, Miss C. E. Mitchell, Miss Norman, Mrs. A. J. Butler, Miss F. Stocker, Miss L. Blease, Mrs. Crawford, Miss M. Batchelor, Miss A. Leigh, Mrs. Attwood, Miss Louise Adams, Miss D. C. Willcox, Mrs. J. H. Reid, Miss M. Wilson, Mrs. Whiting, Miss Holyar, Miss Statter, Mrs. Parkes, Mrs. Earwaker, etc.

My best thanks are proffered to those Helpers and others who sent me kind greetings and encouraging letters at Christmas.

Yours sincerely,

HELEN GREIG SOUTER.

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Lady Pamela's Letter

DEAR COUSIN DELIA,—What a very important part colour plays in our lives! We are apt to overlook this fact, and forget that a world with no colour in it would lose most of its beauty and much of its charm. We have only to try for a moment to visualize a world shorn of colour to realize how drab and uninteresting it would be. The kaleidoscopic beauty of the flowers, the fresh green of trees and grass would be absent from the country-side. The vivacity and charm of the streets of the towns would vanish were colour obliterated, and we should sadly miss the gay splashes of colour provided by the vivid red motor-buses and pillar-boxes, by canary-yellow taxis, and by the variegated hues of women's clothes and jewellery.

In the average modern home colour is used to make a cheerful environment for family life. The average Victorian drawing-room gave a general impression of drabness; but the tendency to-day is to use colour in a spirit of adventure, and use it lavishly and yet not without discretion. Take, for example, the kitchen of days gone by. The walls were often dingy because the thrifty housewife chose a dark wall-covering as it did not show the dirt! The fact that dark walls absorb light and thus increase bills for artificial illuminants was overlooked.

The modern kitchen is a pleasant, cheerful place, and its cheerfulness is chiefly due to the introduction of colour. A tile-patterned wall-paper, varnished to make it proof against steam, can be used effectively. The simulated tiles are outlined in a vivid blue or green, and the colour-note is emphasized in a decorative and colourful border. The hue chosen to predominate is echoed in curtains and floor-covering, and yet again in china or pretty cottage pottery, and in the attractive enamelled red, green, blue, or gilt canisters in which "sugar and spice and all that's nice" are stored.

An interesting fact about colour is that it appeals to everyone. The child as well as the grown-up person appreciates colour, the savage as well as the cultured product of civilization craves for colour in his environment. Parents should, in this connexion, remember that the health and happiness of the little nursery folk depend much on their environment. If they have an airy, cheerful nursery, they are healthier and happier than if their surroundings are less pleasant. The new designs in

nursery wall-papers are not only delightful in design, depicting the scenes and personalities beloved of children, but they are also rich in colour.

We have travelled far since the days when bright colours were considered bizarre, or when only those colours curiously named "art colours" were considered correct. All colours are art colours if used artistically and with a true sense of colour values. Colour brings life and happiness in its wake, and is revealed to-day in the home, in furniture, carpets, curtains, pottery, and in the wall-papers of beautiful design and exquisite colouring which form so happy a background to our possessions and our home life.

Ever yours,

PAMELA.

Answers to Correspondents.

Lady Pamela hopes that readers of THE QUIVER will write to her, and she will have much pleasure in answering their letters in this column.

TO PROTECT THE THROAT. Miramar (Littlehampton).—Evidently you have a slight tendency to weakness of the throat, and this makes you particularly susceptible to infection from microbes in the air carried by particles of dust or moisture. Every time you walk in the streets or enter a crowded room or train you expose your throat to this risk. You ought to always keep a supply of Allenburys glycerine and black currant pastilles at hand, for they are invaluable in clearing the throat and allaying irritation. You can use them with perfect confidence, for they are very pure, being made from the fresh juice of ripe currants and pure glycerine. I feel sure this is just what you want to enable you to secure throat-comfort during the ensuing cold days of early spring.

TO EXCLUDE DRAUGHTS. Adeline (Seaford).—It seems a pity, as your door is made of such handsome wood, to cover it with a portière; but, after all, comfort is the first consideration, and I certainly advise you to hang a heavy curtain, at all events during the winter months. You can remove this as soon as winter is over. With regard to the bottom of the kitchen door, you can make a practical draught-excluder by nailing a strip of an old bicycle tyre along the bottom of the door.

A VALUABLE PHILANTHROPIC SOCIETY. Meta B. (Darlington).—I think that the society of

THE QUIVER

which you have heard must be the Shaftesbury Society and Ragged School Union, which has a record of over eighty years' service among the children and young people in poorest London. Between four and five thousand voluntary workers, in 140 branches and affiliated missions, are steadily at work in a multiplicity of ways under the guidance of local committees. They reach with their uplifting hands tens of thousands of these little Londoners and many of their parents. The cripple work of the society is well known, for it inspires and organizes a vast amount of practical help for over 9,000 now on its register. Adequate treatment at the great hospitals, surgical instruments, spinal carriages, long stay at the recently enlarged Home at Bournemouth—these and other means bring relief and happiness into these handicapped lives. The Barefoot Mission of the Society is at the height of its winter work in the supply of clothing and toys. Parcels of serviceable second-hand goods and toys are greatly esteemed, and all contributions in kind or cash are gratefully welcomed by Mr. Arthur Black, general secretary, John Kirk House, 32 John Street, London, W.C.1.

TO PRESERVE CUT FLOWERS. Ellaline (Margate).—Yes; I have heard that an aspirin tablet placed in the water prolongs the life of cut flowers, but I have never tested it personally.

A HOUSEHOLD HINT. M. F. (Didcot).—Yes; I quite agree that a housewife spends a large sum annually in cleaning materials. You can, however, try polishing brass and steel with fine ash mixed with a little turpentine or paraffin.

TO BEAUTIFY THE HOME. Melissa (Leeds).—I was very interested in your letter and think your new house sounds delightful. For the floors I should certainly have the boards polished, and have small carpets or large rugs. For these you cannot do better than send to F. Hodgson and Sons, Woodsley Road, City of Leeds, and if you mention *THE QUIVER* they will send you an illustrated bargain catalogue. This will give you a good idea of the excellent choice not only of carpets and rugs, but other household requirements, such as house-linens, curtains, etc., that you can obtain from this firm. Their goods are really wonderful value, and you can order them feeling confident of the quality.

WHEN FLOWERS ARE DEAR. Lettie B. (Richmond).—The idea of preparing poppyheads for use as decorations when fresh flowers are scarce is good. You can get the poppyheads from a chemist or florist, and it is quite easy to prepare them. Prick them and let the small seeds escape. Then, choosing bright, effective colours, give each poppyhead a couple of coats of paint, letting one dry before applying the other. The poppyheads thus painted give a vivid touch of colour to the room, and are very quaint and pretty.

MAKING AN OLD UMBRELLA NEW. M. L. B. (Bridgnorth).—In these days, when most of us want to make things last as long as possible, it is wise to give a new lease of life to an old umbrella by sending it to Stanworth's. This

firm makes a special feature of repairing old umbrellas so that they appear once more as good as new. Just wrap up your old umbrella and send it with your name and address and a postal order for 7s. 6d. Address the parcel to Messrs. J. Stanworth and Co., Northern Umbrella Works, Blackburn, and it will reach you by return of post looking as fresh as on the day you first purchased it. This, you will agree, is obviously a great economy. Besides, I think that after one has got used to the handle of a particular umbrella, it is satisfactory to be able to continue using it.

CARE OF A LAWN-MOWER. Garden Lover (Penrith).—It was a pity you put the lawn-mower away without preparing it for disuse. However, you can still clean it well with paraffin, and then smear the parts that are not painted with vaseline and oil the bearings with machine oil.

FOR THE COLD DAYS. Arundel (Felixstowe).—Many people find the cold winds of this time of year almost more trying than wintry weather. You can fortify yourself and the children against chills and the inclemency of the weather by taking extract of malt with cod-liver oil regularly. You can get this from Boots the Chemists, who have branches throughout the country. It is a perfect triple vitamin food, and is highly beneficial in securing good health. It is a good plan to take it regularly, and if you include it in the daily regime for the children, it will be excellent for them also.

A LAUNDRY HINT. V. V. V. (Manchester).—It is certainly an economy to have a good deal of washing done at home. As you have plenty of hot water, the task need not be so very arduous. You will find it saves time and trouble to use a gas-heated iron. The surface always remains bright, and it is easy to regulate the heat. You will also find it pleasanter to use an iron of this kind because the handle does not get hot and so become uncomfortable to hold.

A SUBTLE PROBLEM. Maisie (Earl's Court).—If you have tried to be amiable and considerate, I do not see what else you can do. They evidently have gone out of their way to be unfriendly, and the most dignified course is to appear as if you had not heard the unkind remarks.

FOR BABY'S GOOD HEALTH. Iris B. (Harrowgate).—Your friend must have been thinking of Mellin's Food when she told you how well her baby had thrived. This food has stood the test of time and has proved over and over again that it is very beneficial to babies. The health of the child and the comfort of everybody really depend on the choice of a suitable diet in infancy. When the natural food is not available, every care must be exercised in choosing a substitute. You cannot do better than write, mentioning this magazine and enclosing oil, to Mellin's Food Ltd., London, S.E.15. They will then send you a copy of a very useful handbook dealing with the problem of infant feeding, and they will also send you a sample of the food.



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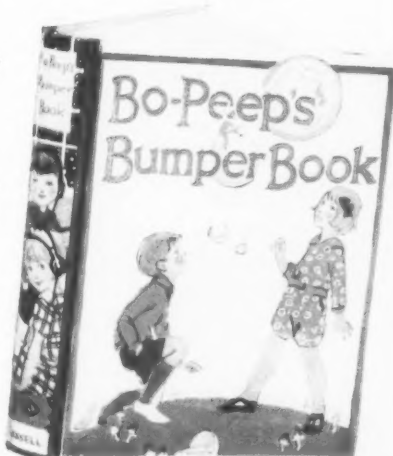
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not work havoc with the fresh beauty of your girls' complexions. Guard their skin health, for it is in the pores of the skin that harmful germs find a lodging. See that their daily bath is taken with Lifebuoy Soap. Give them a tablet each week to keep in their school lockers. It will mean a clear, radiant skin when they attain womanhood.

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